

THE ANALYSED BIBLE

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G. CAMPBELL MORGAN D.D.





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THE ANALYSED BIBLE

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE
ROMANS



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THE EPISTLE OF
PAUL THE APOSTLE
TO THE ROMANS

BY THE REV.
G. CAMPBELL MORGAN, D.D.

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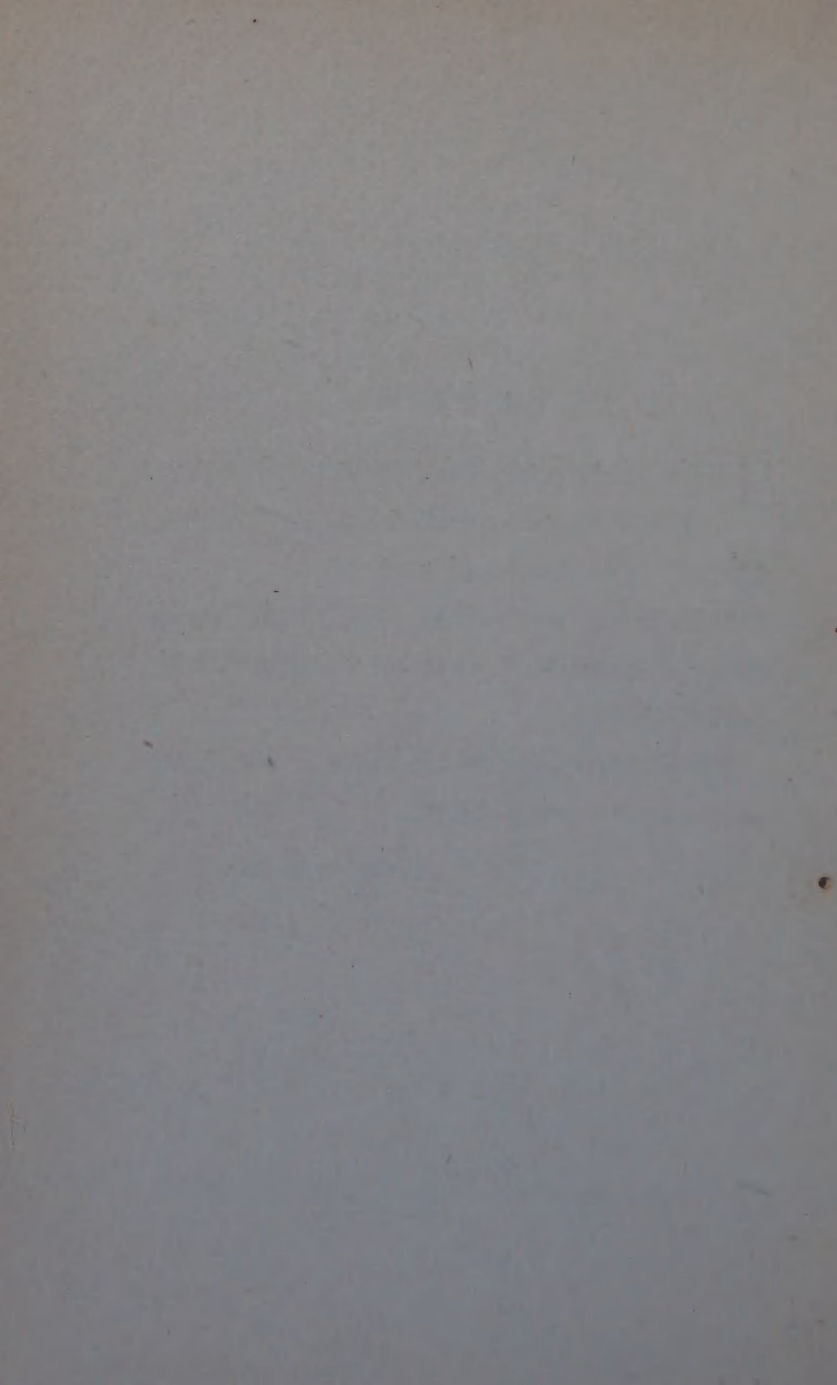
PREFACE

THE Preface to this Volume is found in the Chapter on Romans, in Volume III. of "The Analysed Bible."

Herein we proceed at once to the more detailed analysis of what is set forth in bare outline therein.

Familiarity with that outline is necessary to the study of this book.

G. CAMPBELL MORGAN.



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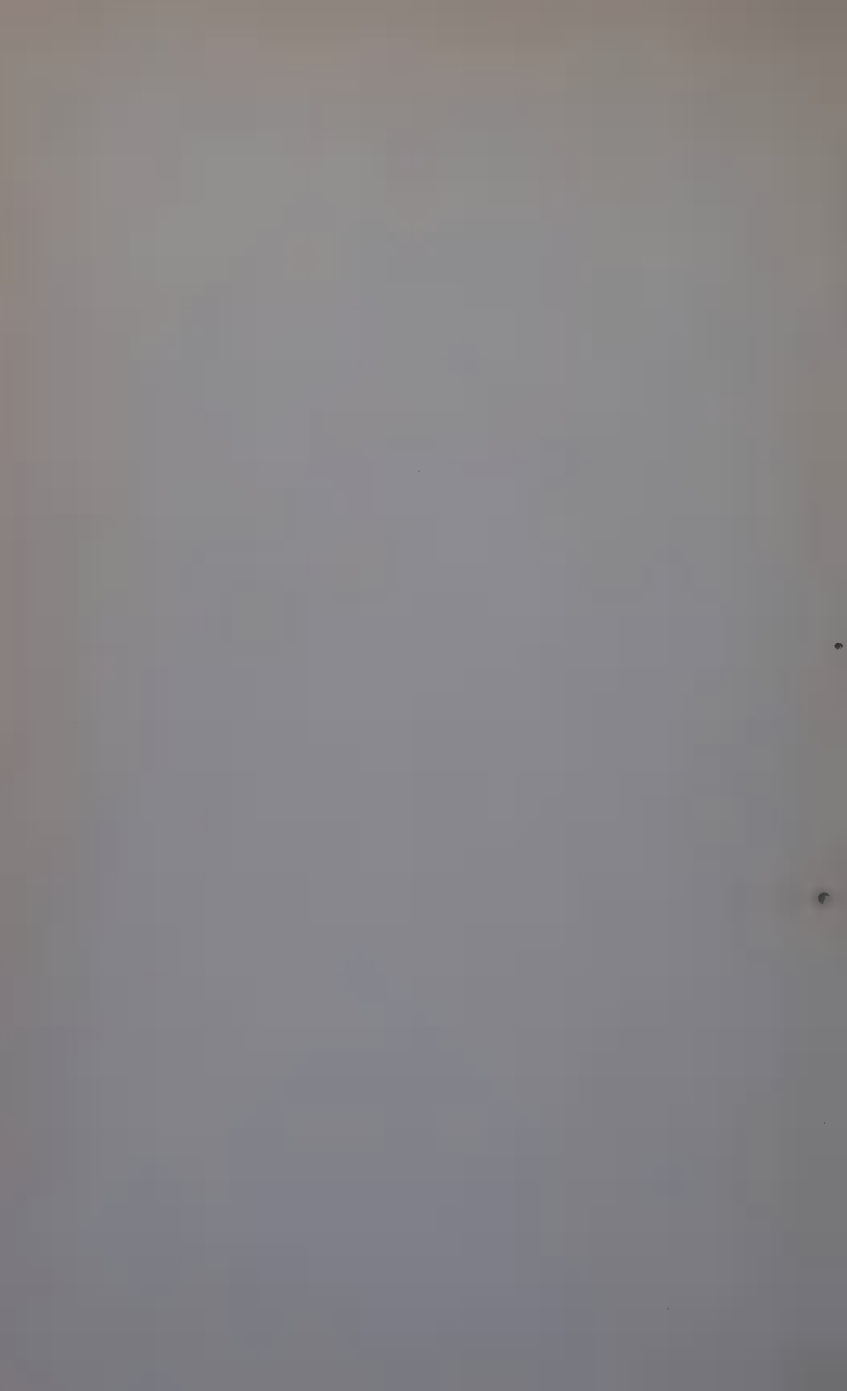
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ROMANS

INTRODUCTION

THE introductory section of the letter to the Romans is full of personal allusion and revelation, but through all, the glory of the theme filling the mind of the writer is clearly manifest.

While Paul introduced himself in the most distinct language, his purpose in doing so was that of declaring his relation to the Gospel. While he spoke with tenderness of those to whom he wrote, the master-passion in his letter was that of their spiritual welfare. From the beginning it is evident that he was conscious of two facts ; that he stood between the superabounding grace of God, as supplied through the Lord Jesus Christ, and the overwhelming need of the world ; and that he and all saints,

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are responsible channels of communication between that grace and that need.

His introduction falls into three main parts ; the first being the address in which writer and readers were introduced to each other ; the second being a paragraph in which he declared his personal interest in them, although he had never seen them ; while in the third he revealed the reason of his writing.

I. THE ADDRESS

In all inspired writings the personality of the human agent is clearly stamped upon the page. This is peculiarly true in the case of Paul. The massiveness and activity of his mind are clearly seen in this opening paragraph, which as a matter of fact consists of but one principal sentence. From the word "Paul" to that which is immediately connected with it, "to all that are in Rome," is a great distance ; and the ground covered in the matter of spiritual suggestion is even greater than the space occupied by the actual words.

Introduction

The address consists of the introduction of the writer ; a parenthesis concerning the Gospel ; and the naming and saluting of the readers.

I. THE WRITER

Paul introduced himself by name, and described himself as the "bond-servant of Jesus Christ"; carefully affirming his authority by referring to his office as that of a "called apostle," "separated unto the Gospel of God."

PARENTHESIS

His reference to the Gospel of God was the occasion of a statement concerning the One of Whom, and of Whose work, the Gospel is the proclamation. In that statement the apostle indicated the relation of the Lord Jesus Christ to prophecy and to history. The Gospel which had been promised through the prophets in the Scriptures was concerning the Son. The double fact of history concerning His personality was that first of His actual

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humanity, He “was born of the seed of David according to the flesh”; and secondly, of His Deity, “declared the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead.” The apostle finally named this Person as “Jesus Christ our Lord”; and affirmed that the evidence that He was alive and active, was found in that through Him, the apostles had received grace, which is the medium of salvation; and apostleship, which is the authority of service.

ii. THE READERS

He addressed himself to the “beloved of God” in Rome, who were “called saints.” By bringing the first and seventh verses together, which is their true relation, we discover the key to the letter; the called apostle wrote to the called saints. In this fact a principle of interpretation in the case of the whole letter is revealed. It is not a tract for the unsaved, but a treatise for the saved. The argument of the apostle makes it evident that salvation does not depend

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upon an understanding of the doctrines of grace, but on belief on the Lord Jesus Christ. It is necessary however that those who by such faith have entered into life, should, in order that their testimony to others may be clear and victorious, understand these doctrines. The elaborate and exhaustive treatment of this letter is intended for the instruction of the saints.

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b. THE LIMITATION.	
<i>"As much as in me is."</i>	

Introduction

II. PERSONAL INTEREST

His reference to his readers led the apostle to words concerning them, and his relation to them, full of personal interest. His threefold attitude toward them is revealed in the key-sentences of this paragraph. It was that of thankfulness, of prayer, and of desire.

That the Church at Rome was victorious in its Christian life is evidenced by the fact that the apostle spoke of its faith as proclaimed throughout the whole world. In that sentence moreover, we have a revelation of a mental attitude full of suggestiveness. This man was a Roman citizen, and he knew how the eyes of the world were upon Rome, and therefore how testimony borne there, must inevitably exert its influence over the widest area.

All that he had heard of the disciples in Rome had filled him with thankfulness, and with earnest desire that they might fulfil their responsibility. He had served them unceasingly by prayer, although he

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had never seen them. His praying had been particular and definite along one line at least, that of his desire to visit the imperial city. That desire was not created by a passion for pleasure, nor was it promoted by the curiosity of the student. He knew that Rome was the centre of the world-movements of his time, and consequently a strategic centre from which to carry the Gospel message to the most distant places.

His desire to come to them was that there might be mutual strengthening in all fitness for the service of the Lord. He would fain impart to them some spiritual gift, and receive from them the enrichment and comfort of his own ministry.

III. THE REASON OF THE LETTER

In stating the reason of his letter the apostle wrote those ever-memorable and illuminative words which declared him to be a "debtor both to Greeks and to Barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish." In the light of what he had said concerning

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the double issue of his coming to Rome, that of giving and receiving, there is clear explanation of what he meant by being debtor. He considered that the Gospel which had made him, and those to whom he wrote what they were, was a deposit which he held in trust for all such as were in the same conditions of need. The gift bestowed upon him was also intended for the Greeks and the Barbarians, for the wise and the foolish. He looked upon all these as being his creditors. So long as they were without the Gospel message which he possessed, and which was a trust committed to him not for himself only, but for them also, he was their debtor.

He was conscious also of the fact of his ability to discharge that debt. The sense of debt was the inspiration of service ; and the consciousness of the power of the Gospel was in itself equipment for service. There is the evidence of limitation in the words "as much as in me is," but they are also characterised by absolute lack of reservation.

A. THE GOSPEL—UNTO SALVATION.
FUNDAMENTAL AFFIRMATION.

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1. 16-17.

i. THE PERSONAL AFFIRMATION.

16a

"I am not ashamed."

ii. THE AFFIRMATION CONCERNING THE GOSPEL. 16b, 17

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"Power unto Salvation."

b. ITS CONDITION.

"To every one that believeth."

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1. *"From Faith"—Obtained by Faith.*

2. *"Unto Faith"—Making possible the Life of Faith.*

The Gospel—unto Salvation

CHRIST THE SALVATION OF GOD

The introduction merges immediately into the great argument of the letter as the apostle proceeded from the statement of his consciousness of indebtedness and his affirmation of readiness, to the task of which the whole letter is the fulfilment, that of setting forth Christ as the Salvation of God. This he does in two main divisions, in the first of which he deals with the Gospel unto salvation ; and in the second with the transformation by salvation.

A. THE GOSPEL—UNTO SALVATION

In this first division of his treatise the apostle's method is characterised by absolute clearness. It is of the nature of a great argument which proceeds in definite sequence from a challenging affirmation, to a patient dealing with certain difficulties which would inevitably arise in the minds of some of those to whom he wrote. It falls therefore into these four parts, the fundamental affirmation ; a discussion of condemnation

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as revealing the need for the Gospel ; a setting forth of salvation as the subject of the Gospel message ; and finally a discussion of objections.

FUNDAMENTAL AFFIRMATION

The division opens with a statement in brief of the whole argument of the epistle ; and moreover, an unveiling of truth concerning that Gospel deposit, the possession of which, made the apostle a debtor.

The personal affirmation, " I am not ashamed," links the great argument to the introductory section, and indeed completes the threefold statement which unveils the secret of Paul's missionary enthusiasm. " I am not ashamed of the Gospel " is the final word ; the three being, " I am debtor," " I am ready," " I am not ashamed."

Concerning that Gospel of which he declared he was not ashamed, he then made his fundamental affirmation. He first described its effect. It is a Gospel of power, that is, one equal to the accomplishment of infinitely more than the presentation of an

The Gospel—unto Salvation

ideal, or the enunciation of an ethic. These might be given to men, and yet leave them exactly where they were; but the Gospel tells the secret of a power which enables. Moreover, it is "power . . . unto salvation." In that statement there is recognition of the fact of man's ruin, and a declaration of the possibility of his redemption.

The one condition upon which the power of the Gospel may be experienced is revealed in the phrase "to every one that believeth." Thus far he had declared that in the Gospel there is provision, which meets need upon the fulfilment of condition.

He then proceeded to announce the nature of that provision. The Gospel does not proclaim an indulgence for sin, or find an excuse for the man who has sinned. It is rather the apocalypse of a new righteousness at the disposal of unrighteous men. The revelation of the righteousness of God in the Gospel, is not the declaration of the fact that God is righteous. That fact men knew by the law. It is the far more wonderful announcement that God has

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provided a righteousness for unrighteous men. Again the condition of salvation is recognised in the phrase "from faith unto faith"; "from faith," that is, salvation obtained by faith; "unto faith," that is, power operating in the life so as to make possible the life of faith.

I. CONDEMNATION—THE GOSPEL NEEDED.

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a. A PRINCIPLE.	18, 19
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β. <i>Unrighteousness. The Manifestation.</i>	
2. " <i>Hold down the truth.</i> "	18b, 19
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a. <i>Bodily Dishonour.</i>	24, 25
β. <i>Spiritual Debasement.</i>	26, 27
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The Gospel—unto Salvation

I. CONDEMNATION—THE GOSPEL NEEDED

The apostle shows the need for salvation by dealing exhaustively with the subject of the ruin of the race. Writing to the saints in Rome, many of whom would be Gentiles, and others of whom were undoubtedly Hebrews, he dealt with the race by showing first that the Gentile was condemned; secondly, that the Jew was condemned; and finally, therefore, that the whole world was guilty.

i. THE GENTILE CONDEMNED

In this section dealing with the Gentile condemnation, we have the statement of a principle; a declaration of Gentile knowledge; a deduction concerning Gentile sin; and a description of Gentile judgment.

a. A PRINCIPLE

In stating the principle, the apostle first declared that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against ungodliness and unrighteousness. This combination of terms

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should be carefully noted, revealing as it does the cause and effect in all sin and consequent corruption. That, out of which unrighteousness inevitably proceeds, is ungodliness, the putting of God out of the life, and the neglect of, or rebellion against the facts of His Kingship and requirements. That which inevitably proceeds out of ungodliness, is unrighteousness, which is life failing to fulfil the Divine requirements; for the only standard of right is that of the requirement of God.

The process is described as that of holding down the truth in unrighteousness, which is to say that unrighteousness necessarily issues from the knowledge of some measure of truth, and consists in refusal to submit to the requirement thereof.

b. GENTILE KNOWLEDGE

Seeing that this is so, the apostle immediately proceeded to declare the measure of Gentile knowledge. Through created things God had at least made perfectly

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clear the fact of His power and divinity. There is but one conclusion for all rational thinking in the presence of creation, and that is, that such creation demonstrates power and divinity ; or, if we would borrow the language of our own day, creation demonstrates force and intelligence. This then was the measure of truth possessed by the Gentiles.

c. GENTILE SIN

Gentile sin consisted in the fact that instead of following the necessary issue of such reasoning, that of glorifying as God, those invisible forces which the visible revealed, they deified the visible things ; and thus yielding themselves wholly to the creature, instead of to the Creator, they became sensualised and degraded. This action on their part had been professedly that of wisdom. The apostle declared that by it they became fools, in that they turned from the worship of the incorruptible to that of the corruptible in differing forms.

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d. GENTILE JUDGMENT

In these results already referred to consisted the judgment of the Gentiles. That judgment the apostle proceeded to describe at greater length. Its principle is evident in the threefold use of the expression "God gave them up." An examination of the three paragraphs will reveal the fact of the degradation of the whole man.

He gave them up that their bodies should be dishonoured. Worshipping the creature rather than the Creator, they fell into all manner of misuse of their own bodily powers, with the result that their physical being was debased and corrupted.

This issued in the degradation of their spirit; which, acting under the influence of deified physical powers, became in turn the very inspiration and energy of vileness; and this reacted again upon the body in all manner of unseemliness.

Once again the issue was a reprobate mind, a mind having lost its true balance and perspective, and being characterised

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by all the evil things which the apostle names.

Thus the judgment of God on the Gentiles was not capricious, and arbitrary; but consisted in the natural results of their refusal to recognise as God, the One revealed through creation: and of their deification of the creation itself.

“God gave them up” is the simple declaration of the fact that God is the God of law, and another form of stating the truth that “whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”

The apostle finally declared in this connection that those practising such things knew that they were worthy of death, that is to say, they were perfectly conscious that the issue of their practices was their own destruction; and yet they continued in them, and consented with them that practised them.

The wrath of God from heaven against ungodliness and unrighteousness is thus manifest in the corruption which follows upon the sin of refusing to act upon the measure of light received.

ii. THE JEW CONDEMNED.	ii.-iii. 8
a. A PRINCIPLE. RELIGION IS ETHICAL.	ii. 1-16
1. <i>The Judgment of Man.</i>	i
<i>Invalid on account of the Practice of Sin.</i>	
2. <i>The Judgment of God.</i>	2-16
a. <i>According to Truth.</i>	2-5
Against the Practice of Sin.	2, 3
After Longsuffering.	4, 5
β. <i>According to Works.</i>	6-12
The Principle stated.	6 & 11, 12
Application.	7-10
Rewards.	7 & 10
Punishments.	8, 9
γ. <i>According to Gospel.</i>	13-16
The Principle stated.	13 & 16
Illustration. The Gentiles.	14, 15
b. THE CONDEMNATION OF THE JEW.	17-24
1. <i>Intellectual Orthodoxy.</i>	17, 18
2. <i>Relative Complacency.</i>	19, 20
3. <i>Ethical Failure.</i>	21-23
4. <i>Vocational Sin.</i>	24
c. A PRINCIPLE. RELIGION IS SPIRITUAL.	25-29
1. <i>The Test of Ceremony.</i>	25-28
a. <i>Vitalised by Obedience.</i>	25a
β. <i>Vitiated by Disobedience.</i>	25b-28
2. <i>The Essential in Religion.</i>	29
a. <i>Spirituality.</i>	
β. <i>Godliness.</i>	
d. THE DIFFICULTIES.	iii. 1-8
1. <i>The Advantage of the Jew.</i>	1, 2
a. <i>The Questions asked.</i>	
β. <i>The Answer. Revelation.</i>	
2. <i>The Faithfulness of God.</i>	3, 4
a. <i>The Questions asked.</i>	
β. <i>The Answer. Judgment.</i>	
3. <i>The wrath of God.</i>	5-8
a. <i>The Questions asked.</i>	5
β. <i>The Answer. Righteousness.</i>	6-8

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ii. THE JEW CONDEMNED

It is evident that at this point the apostle turned to the Jew, although he did not immediately name him. The Jew condemned Gentile sins, evidently under the impression that the possession of the law resulted in a closer relationship to God, and ensured some kind of benefit to himself. This view the apostle combated, ruthlessly sweeping away all such false confidence. Again his method was characterised by clearness and skill. In the course of it he enunciated two basic principles of religious life. Between his dealing with these, in a brief passage he showed wherein lay the sin of the Jew, and thus accounted for his condemnation. Knowing that certain difficulties would arise as the result of his argument, he dealt with these in a closing paragraph.

a. A PRINCIPLE. RELIGION IS ETHICAL

The attitude of the Jew to the Gentile was that of contempt, resulting in the first

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place from the idea that the possession of knowledge of the things of God was in itself of the essence of religion. The Gentile had received no Divine revelation, and was corrupt in life. The Jew had received the Divine revelation, and therefore arrogated to himself the right to sit in judgment on the Gentile.

Against that view, and its consequent attitude, the apostle's first statement of principle was directed. He declared that no man was in a position to pass judgment on another man, who himself was guilty of the sins he condemned in the other. He thus inferentially charged upon the Jew the sin of practising the very evils which he condemned in the Gentiles.

He then proceeded to describe the judgment of God, and in such a way as to demonstrate the fact that the Jew was equally under condemnation with the Gentile. His dealing with this subject of the judgment of God falls into three parts.

In the first he simply declared that it was according to truth, proceeding against the

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practice of sin after forbearance and long-suffering.

It follows therefore that His judgment is according to works, rewards or punishments being meted out absolutely upon the basis of the kind of life which men live. The Jew having the law, is not by the fact of that possession freed from obligation as to conduct. Those sinning without the law, perish without the law. What the apostle meant by that, must be gathered from that earlier paragraph in which he had described Gentile sin, and Gentile judgment. Those sinning under the law, perish under the law. The law itself has no virtue save as it is obeyed. Thus the apostle denied the view that religion is essentially intellectual, by declaring that the only expression of it which is of value is ethical.

Thus, at the very beginning of this letter, the master-theme of which is salvation by faith, we have an overwhelming and unanswerable indictment of that particular heresy to which an improper emphasis of the doctrine is liable to give rise. Nothing

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can be clearer than the apostle's teaching that works will be the final test of judgment. Faith which does not produce these is declared to be useless. Privilege which does not issue in response to responsibility, is but severer condemnation. God has no people in whom He excuses sin. The privileged soul who sins must die on account of the sin, and in spite of all the privileges. The Jew is as great a failure as the Gentile in the matter of actual righteousness. Godliness as privileged relationship is of no value except as it produces actual righteousness.

The final statement of the apostle is that judgment will be according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In this statement the light of the Gospel is seen shining with a new glory through the severity of the teaching which had just been advanced. Not for a single moment does it lower the standard of requirement, but it sings the song of hope to the man under condemnation. In reading this paragraph particular notice should be taken of the fact that verses

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fourteen and fifteen are in parenthesis, and that the main statement of the apostle can only be gained by reading verses thirteen and sixteen in immediate relationship. The basis of judgment is to be the actual condition of man, whether he has lived without the law or under the law ; but he is to be judged finally by Jesus Christ. That is to say, the final test of character and of conduct is to be that of man's attitude to the Saviour. Evidently therefore the presentation of the Gospel is the last opportunity that man has ; and equally evident is it, that every man must have this opportunity as the basis of judgment.

b. THE CONDEMNATION OF THE JEW

Turning from his discussion of the first principle, the apostle definitely and directly dealt with the condemnation of the Jew. This he did by first describing his mental attitude. It was that of intellectual godliness. The Jews were proud of their name, were resting upon the fact that they possessed the law. They gloried in the God Whose

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they were, knowing His will, and approving; that is, they were convinced of the excellencies of excellent things because they were instructed out of the law. Intellectually therefore he admitted that they were orthodox.

He then proceeded to describe their consequent attitude toward the outside nations. They considered that as a nation they were "a guide . . . a light . . . a corrector . . . a teacher." This revealed their sense of superiority over all other peoples, and their consequent confidence in their right to be didactic and dogmatic. Moreover that attitude was in some senses justified, for the apostle recognised that in the law they did actually possess the form of knowledge, and of truth; and it should be remembered that this word "form" (*μόρφωσις*) indicates far more than an outward formality. It suggests that the law has in it such embodiment of knowledge and of truth as to be equal to the realisation of conduct and character when obeyed. As truth itself is a sanctifying power, so the law being a

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correct revelation, a true form, a full unfolding of a Divine power, does issue in the life of holiness and righteousness in the case of such as observe its commandments to do them.

Having recognised these facts, the apostle charged the Jews with ethical failure. This he did in a series of questions, each one of which inferentially charged them with actual failure in conduct in the very matters which were regulated by the law for which they stood, and which they professed to teach.

Finally, upon the basis of this argument, the apostle charged the Jew with that which was his principal and most terrible sin. Because his mental attitude was correct, his relative position should have been that of a guide to those without revelation; but he had absolutely failed in realisation of that at which the law ever aims, and therefore he had become a blasphemer of the name of God among the Gentiles. If it were true that the Gentiles had imperfect light, they ought to have received the more perfect light from these

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people, who upon their own showing, were placed in the position of guide, and light, and corrector, and teacher. But because in the actualities of outward conduct they had committed the very sins which their law condemned, the Gentile had seen no reason to believe through their testimony in the one living God to Whom they professed to be related. Thus therefore His name had been blasphemed as the result of Jewish failure.

C. A PRINCIPLE. RELIGION IS SPIRITUAL

Having made this most serious charge, the apostle declared his second principle, namely that religion is spiritual. This was for the correction of their false conception that the true expression of religion was ceremonial. Before dealing with this more particularly, it may be well to notice the apostolic method. He had corrected their view that religion was essentially intellectual by declaring that its expression must be ethical. He now corrected their view that the expression of religion was

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ceremonial, by declaring that essentially it was spiritual.

In sentences characterised by almost overwhelming force and incisiveness, he swept away the refuge of lies. The boasted privileges were all valueless. The externalities which were the symbols of possession counted for nothing, because the inward condition demonstrated the absence of the essential fact. Then turning to a statement of the case from the other side, he made all this even more emphatic by affirming that where the external symbols are lacking, if there be the inward fulfilment of intention, the lack of the external is of no moment.

Arguing in the clear light of the Divine requirement and purpose, he made the most sweeping and tremendous statement when he announced that a Jew who is one outwardly merely, is not a Jew; but that he who is a Jew inwardly, even though he lack the outward mark, is the true Jew.

Thus again from a new angle, and with new emphasis is the idea that justification is by faith, without regard to its

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expression in works, declared to be false. The principles underlying this passage are of permanent value, and of searching power. Their unanswerable logic should prepare us for all that is to follow, and thus prevent any disproportionate explanation of the doctrine of justification by faith.

d. THE DIFFICULTIES

The apostle then turned to a brief discussion of certain objections which would almost inevitably be raised in consequence of what he had said concerning the true spiritual interpretation of the position of the Jew.

First, "What advantage then hath the Jew?" If circumcision is in itself of no avail, where is the gain? Is this covenant not a Divine covenant? Underneath the question suggested, which the apostle knew would be the question of the Jew, there lurked the idea that there is a profit in the external fact of circumcision. The apostle did not again state his argument on the matter, having done so already;

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but in a brief sentence declared what he considered to be the advantage of the Jew. He said "Much every way," and then proceeded to mention only one, which he spoke of as being "first of all," that is, of supreme importance, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God. By this he referred to the revelations, declarations, and promises of God, which constitute the basis of faith—that is, the Old Testament Scriptures in their entirety. To these people, separated from other nations, He had committed that great deposit, consisting of utterances and writings in which He was revealed, and His will concerning man made known. Therein lay the supreme advantage of the Jew.

A new question naturally arose. If faith on the part of man fail, will God be unfaithful? Does His faithfulness depend upon man's faith? In approaching this question, it is of the utmost importance that we understand what is meant by the Divine faithfulness. The question as here asked was one which demanded to know

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whether, if a Jew, entrusted with the oracles, did not believe them, God would break His Word as therein revealed? To this the apostle replied that is impossible for God to be unfaithful. His exposition of the faithfulness of God is given in his quotation from the penitential psalm, in which David between his confession of sin and his prayer for purification, based his plea upon the justice of God. The evident deduction of that quotation in this connection is, that the faithfulness of God is demonstrated by His unchanging attitude toward man. If a man sins, He judges him. If he repents, He forgives him.

Yet another question logically followed. If sin becomes the means of glorifying God, in that it demonstrates His faithfulness, is it righteous to punish the sinner? The question is so terrible that when the apostle stated it, he parenthetically added, "I speak after the manner of men," and then proceeded to declare that unless God did punish sin, He could have no basis upon which He could judge the world at all.

iii. THE WHOLE WORLD GUILTY.	iii. 9-20
a. THE CONDITION OF THE RACE.	9-11
1. <i>A Common Condemnation.</i>	9
2. <i>The Condition described.</i>	10, 11
a. <i>Degraded Will.</i>	
"None righteous."	
β. <i>Darkened Intelligence.</i>	
"None that understandeth."	
γ. <i>Deadened Emotion.</i>	
"None that seeketh after God."	
b. THE CONDUCT OF THE RACE.	12-15
1. <i>The Attitude of Sin.</i>	12a
2. <i>The Activities of Sin.</i>	12b-15
c. THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE RACE.	16-20
1. <i>The Consciousness described.</i>	16-18
a. <i>The Disaster of degraded Will.</i>	16
β. <i>The Despair of darkened Intelligence.</i>	17
γ. <i>The Degradation of deadened Emotion.</i>	18
2. <i>A Common Condemnation.</i>	19, 20

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iii. THE WHOLE WORLD GUILTY

Having thus dealt separately with the Gentile and the Jew, the apostle now included both, and uttered the appalling verdict of the condemnation of the whole race in the quotation of a series of passages from the Old Testament.

The first group of quotations sets forth the condition of the race. Men everywhere are seen degraded in the central and majestic citadel of their personality. The master principle of the will is out of the straight, "there is none righteous." The intellectual faculty through which guiding light should pass to influence choices and decisions is darkened, "there is none that understandeth." The emotional nature which should be for evermore the inspiration of action is deadened toward that which is highest, "there is none that seeketh after God."

The second group of quotations reveals the general conduct of the race. So far as relationship to that which is higher is

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concerned the attitude is of the essence of sin, all are turned aside and become unprofitable. Consequently all the activities of the life are sinful.

The final group describes the consciousness of the race in the midst of the conditions first described. The degradation of the will issues in disaster, "destruction and misery are in their ways." The darkening of the intelligence results in overwhelming despair, "the way of peace they have not known." The deadening of emotion is manifest in the degradation of callousness, "there is no fear of God before their eyes."

This whole description applied equally to the Jew with the Gentile; and indeed, the apostle made special application of it to the Jew. Having quoted from the oracles which they possessed, he declared that the message of the law was pre-eminently for those who were under the law; and indicated that his reason for having made the quotations was that every mouth might be stopped, and all the world

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brought under the judgment of God. The whole question as to the Gentile was settled in his first section, and he now claimed that the Jew also who had been making excuses, and pronouncing his judgment upon the Gentile, must in honesty be compelled to silence, and to confession of guilt.

Thus ends the first section of the division. It presents a picture of humanity from the Divine view-point. That picture is so terrible as to create in us a sense of utter hopelessness, for whether with, or without law, man has equally and signally failed.

Yet let us at once remind our hearts that this terrible revelation of the condition of the race in its ruin, is the prelude to the proclamation of the glorious Gospel of the grace of God.

Because God is love, this very condition of hopeless and helpless ruin makes demands upon His heart, and calls for His interference in order that out of the experience of utter hopelessness, man may find deliverance and salvation.

II. SALVATION. THE GOSPEL MESSAGE. iii. 21-viii.

i. JUSTIFICATION. iii. 21-v.

a. THE PROVISION ANNOUNCED. iii. 21-31

1. *The Scheme declared.* 21, 22

a. "*But*" . . . *The backward Look.*

The whole World guilty.

β. "*Now*."

A Righteousness of God manifest.

In Harmony with Law and Prophets.

At the Disposal of Faith.

Jesus Christ the Object.

2. *The Scheme developed.* 23-31

a. *General Statement.* 23, 24

Condemnation. Personal.

Justification. Relative.

β. *Particular Statement.* 25-31

On the part of God.

25, 26

Method.

25

Propitiation by Blood.

Appropriation by Faith.

The Activity of Righteousness.

Manifestation. 26

Of Righteousness.

In Justice.

In Justification.

As to Man.

27-31

Method.

27-30

Exclusion of Glorifying.

Exercise of Faith.

Inclusion of Jew and Gentile.

Manifestation. 31

The Establishment of the Law.

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II. SALVATION. THE GOSPEL MESSAGE

We now come to that part of the epistle which contains its supreme message. Having shown the condemnation under which the whole world is lying, the apostle sets forth God's way of salvation for lost men. His statement falls into three parts, the first dealing with justification; the second with sanctification; and the third with glorification; thus covering the whole of man's need, past, present, and future; and having regard to his standing before God, his conformity to the will of God, and his ultimate perfecting in fellowship with God.

i. JUSTIFICATION

The fundamental subject is that of justification, the section dealing with which may be divided into three parts. In the first of these the provision is announced; in the second the principle is illustrated; and in the third the privileges are described.

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a. THE PROVISION ANNOUNCED

As everything which is to follow in the course of the letter is dependent upon the fundamental fact of justification we look for clearness and conciseness of statement, and we are not disappointed. In broad and general terms the apostle first declared the scheme of salvation; and then particularly developed it.

1. The Scheme declared

The "But" with which the paragraph opens, necessarily recalls the argument advanced concerning the condemnation of the world. The last finding of that argument was that "every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may be brought under the judgment of God." Thus the world is seen silent, having nothing to say; without righteousness, without excuse; having no ground on which to plead for mercy, and no method to suggest for its own salvation. It is the silence of helplessness and hopelessness.

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To this silent and condemned race the evangel comes. “But *now*,” begins the apostle. This “Now” is God’s great word, indicating a result following the accomplishment of a work, and suggesting a present and immediate application.

Now, to the silent world there is announced the fact that “a righteousness of God hath been manifested.” This declaration links the commencement of the new section with the fundamental affirmation which announced that in the Gospel “is revealed a righteousness of God.” This manifested righteousness, whatever it may be in itself, and whencesoever it may come, is at the disposal of the silent and condemned race. In this preliminary statement the apostle tabulated great facts concerning the righteousness with which he dealt more fully subsequently. First it is a righteousness witnessed to, by the “law and the prophets.” Secondly it is a righteousness appropriated by the faith of any, for “there is no distinction.” Finally it is a righteousness resulting from “faith in Jesus Christ.”

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2. *The Scheme developed*

In this section the apostle dealt more explicitly with the second of the facts already referred to, as tabulated in the introductory declaration; taking this first because it is the central truth of the whole movement, namely, that this righteousness is at the disposal of those who believe.

This fuller detail he again introduced with a general statement. He repeated his charge against humanity, but in this case in such a way as to bring guilt home to individuals. There is a perpetual tendency in the heart of man to consent to the general statement that men are sinners, while there is a constant reluctance to confess personal guilt. In this summarised charge therefore, the apostle passed from the thought of the sin of the race to the actual sin of the individual, as he declared that "All have sinned," rather than that, All are sinners. Not that the second statement is untrue, but that every individual has been guilty of disobedience

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to light, either with or without law, and that the personal aspect of sin issues in failure to realise the glory of God, and constitutes the ruin of the person.

Having thus repeated his charge in this more particular form, he declared the great provision of grace, by first naming the original source of justification in the words, "by His grace"; then declaring the medium through which that grace has operated in order to justification, in the phrase, "the redemption," a phrase fraught with infinite meaning, to be more fully unfolded as the argument proceeded; and finally naming the Person, "Christ Jesus," Who has accomplished that work of redemption, which issues in the justification of the sinner.

How closely these verses stand together revealing need and provision, ruin and redemption! Over against the sin of all is placed the grace of One; and at the disposal of those failing of the glory, is placed the infinite redemption of grace, which, as will be shown, issues at last in fulness of glory.

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The apostle next proceeded to more particular dealing with this great subject ; showing its method and manifestation both on the part of God and on the part of man. The method of God is that of setting forth, or presenting, Christ Jesus to men, to be a Propitiation. He is God's provision. Man is guilty, and consequently silent, having no method by which he can cancel his sin, or live the life of righteousness. God provides in the Person of His Son all that man needs. The first work of the Son in fulfilment of the Father's purpose is that of vindicating righteousness by making it clear that God sacrificed nothing of His requirement when in His forbearance He passed over "sins done aforetime." The work of the Son is a revelation of the method by which it was possible for God thus to act. This work was accomplished in the mystery of all that is symbolised by "His blood." Thus the work of the Cross is set at the heart of the evangel of salvation, and is seen to be a fulfilment of God's purpose by God's Son, for the vindication

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of God's righteousness in the activity of God's forbearance.

This moreover, was for the demonstration of the righteousness of God, not only with regard to the "sins done aforetime," but also "at this present season." The result of the work of Christ is declared in a statement which is as startling as it is gracious, "that He might Himself be just," or righteous; "and the Justifier," or the One Who accounts as righteous; "him that hath faith in Jesus." This is the glorious evangel by the proclamation of which, men come to know that a righteousness of God is now at the disposal of unrighteous man on condition of his faith in Jesus. The evangel is founded upon eternal justice, because the righteousness of God has been vindicated in the death of Jesus, and placed at the disposal of man by that death because of the perfection of the life which preceded the death. Here all human reason is baffled, and yet here faith finds foothold upon reason, which nothing can shake.

In the presence of this evangel man is

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still silent, and boasting is entirely excluded, for the justification of the sinner does not result from the operation of a law of works : it is entirely the act of God in response to faith. Therefore justification is available to Jews and Gentiles alike, because it is the act of God, Who is the God of all ; in answer not to works, but to faith. Here again the apostle was careful to guard himself from misinterpretation. Faith establishes rather than makes void the law. The law cannot produce justification, but justification will issue in the fulfilment of the law.

b. THE PRINCIPLE ILLUSTRATED.	iv
1. <i>Abraham. Personal.</i>	1-12
a. <i>The Inquiry.</i>	1-2
β. <i>The Answer of Scripture.</i>	3-8
Righteousness reckoned to Faith.	3-5
The Testimony of David.	6-8
γ. <i>The Place of Circumcision.</i>	9-12
The Inquiry.	9, 10a
The Answer.	10b-12
Faith before Circumcision.	
Circumcision the Seal of Righteousness.	
2. <i>Abraham. Relative.</i>	13-17
a. <i>The Promise. Before Law.</i>	13-15
To Righteousness.	
Of Faith.	
β. <i>The Promise. Sure.</i>	16, 17
To the Seed of the Law.	
To the Seed of Faith.	
3. <i>Abraham. Fulfilment.</i>	18-22
a. <i>Faith against Hope.</i>	18
β. <i>Faith against Circumstances.</i>	19-21
γ. <i>Faith the Principle of Righteousness.</i>	22
4. <i>Application of Illustration.</i>	23-25

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b. THE PRINCIPLE ILLUSTRATED

It is evident that the apostle had still in mind the difficulties of the Jew, and therefore he turned aside to show that this method of imputing righteousness in response to faith, had always been that which God had used in His dealings with Israel. In illustration of this the apostle took the case of Abraham, the father and founder of the nation, and showed how he was accepted and rewarded through faith, and not through works; both as to his personal acceptance with God, and as to his position as the recipient of the promise of a coming deliverance. In this section of illustration there are four movements; the first dealing with the personal acceptance of Abraham; the second with his relative relationship; the third with the operation of his faith in the hour of crisis; and the last with an application, showing the identity of principle between the history of Abraham, and the experience of believers.

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1. *Abraham. Personal*

In view of all Paul had written, the Jew would naturally come to the conclusion that Abraham had no advantage over others ; and the apostle stated the difficulty as it would occur to the mind of the Jew in the preliminary inquiry, "What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather, according to the flesh, hath found ?"

In replying to this the apostle boldly declared that if Abraham had received justification on the basis of works, he had something to glory in, but not toward God. In that case his glorying would be in his own accomplishment. In refutation of this he made his appeal to Scripture—citing its declaration concerning Abraham, and quoting from one of the psalms of David.

The first declaration affirmed that Abraham's belief of God was reckoned unto him for righteousness, that is to say that he was justified by faith. If his justification had been a response to his work, then it would

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have been of the nature of the payment of a debt due to him, and not a gift of grace. This however, was not the case. In further enforcement of this truth, the apostle quoted the opening words of the great psalm of David which deals with the experience of a man in the matter of his sin, and his relation to Jehovah. In that quotation the emphasis to which the apostle desired to draw attention was undoubtedly that of the fact that the blessedness in each case results from the action of God, in complete independence of the works of man. Of course this is not to deny what has been affirmed in the earlier part of the letter, and will be affirmed again in its course, that the demonstration of faith is works. It is merely to insist upon it that not by what man does can he free himself from sin, and find entrance to blessedness. Faith is not mentioned in this quotation from the psalms, but the fact is clearly revealed that blessedness results from God's action apart from man's works.

What then is the place and value of

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circumcision? The apostle imagines the Jew asking with reference to his psalm quotation, as to whether the blessing to which the psalmist referred, was pronounced upon the circumcision, or upon the uncircumcision also. The point of the inquiry is that the Jew would be likely to argue that the psalm was the psalm of the Jew, and that it had no application to men outside that covenant of which circumcision was the sign.

He replied to this view by showing that Abraham was justified before the rite of circumcision was established, and that such a rite was merely the outward sign of an established fact. It was perfectly evident therefore that in this matter of circumcision, works were the outcome of righteousness resulting from faith, rather than faith the outcome of righteousness issuing from works. The apostle finally stated this in such a superlative fashion as must have been astonishing indeed to the ears of a Jew, when he declared that Abraham was the father not merely of circumcised men

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according to the flesh, but of all who believe, even though they be in uncircumcision.

2. *Abraham. Relative*

Passing beyond the question of Abraham's personal relation to Jehovah, the apostle proceeded to consider the larger meaning of the call of Abraham, and through him of the new nation, that namely of the great promise made to him, that he should be the heir of the world.

The reference is of course to the Messianic hope which was the inspiration of Abraham's obedience, and the centre of the national life. The promise did not come to Abraham through law, but through that righteousness of faith which was the subject of the previous consideration. In his Galatian letter the apostle, dealing with this same subject, showed that the Messianic hope burned in the heart of Abraham, and was the abiding inspiration of the life of the nation springing from his loins, for at least four hundred years before the law

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was given. It was the promise of grace to faith. If this promise of deliverance had been dependent upon the keeping of law, then it was impossible of fulfilment, because the coming of law had issued in the manifestation of sin, which in the very nature of the case resulted in wrath ; and moreover, the violation of conditions necessarily issued in the disannulling of the promise.

The promise was the reward of that faith which, at the call of God, abandoned everything to follow and obey. Thus the promise is sure to all the seed of Abraham, not only to that which is of law, but to that also which is of faith. All this is most forcefully seen in the fact that the nation after the flesh, of which Abraham was the father, was in its very existence the result of the act of God, by which in answer to faith, He quickened the dead, and called the things that were not as though they were.

3. *Abraham. Fulfilment*

When, humanly speaking, the possibility of such a nation had ceased to exist,

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Abraham believed against hope. He believed moreover, against circumstances, being sure that God was able to perform what He had promised in spite of all contradictory appearances, by granting him a son, and through that son creating a nation. In the hour when hope in the ordinary sense of the word was at an end, and when, by every natural law, the result desired seemed impossible, this man by faith, and by faith only, glorified God in his unwavering confidence that what He had promised He was able also to perform. His son was given by the act of God in answer to that faith.

4. *Application of Illustration*

In a brief but lucid statement, the apostle made application of his illustration to the argument of his letter. The history of Abraham bears testimony which must strengthen the faith and confidence of those who look to and believe in Jesus. Righteousness is in like manner reckoned not to those who work, but to those who believe.

c. THE PRIVILEGES DESCRIBED.

v.

1. *Personal Values.*

1-11

a. *Eternal.*

1, 2

The Privileges.

Access into Grace.

Hope of the Glory.

The Responsibilities.

Let us have Peace.

Let us rejoice.

β. *Temporal.*

3-11

The Responsibility.

3a

"Let us rejoice . . . in Tribulation."

(Parenthesis.

3b-10

On rejoicing in Tribulation.)

{ The Reason.

3b, 4

Tribulation.

Patience.

Proof.

Hope.

{ The Ground of Hope.

5

The Love of God.

Experienced through the Holy Ghost.

{ The Evidence of Love.

6-10

"Christ died."

"Much more."

The Privilege.

11

"We also rejoice . . . through . . . Reconciliation."

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C. THE PRIVILEGES DESCRIBED

The main argument is now resumed. After the illustrative section the apostle returned to the discussion of the values of that justification, the provision of which he had announced in the first movement. Chapter five, as to argument, follows immediately upon the closing section of chapter three, in which the scheme of God's salvation was declared and developed. The privileges of justification are the values of salvation; and these the apostle deals with in two parts; first, those of the individual believer; and secondly, those of the race.

1. *Personal Values*

The personal values of justification are eternal and temporal; and the apostle deals with them in turn. In each case he is careful in stating the privileges, to show their corresponding responsibilities.

a. *Eternal*

The eternal privileges are those of access into grace, and the consequent hope of

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the glory. The word "grace" in this connection is used in the sense of favour. The standing of the justified soul is not merely that of being at an end of conflict with God, although this is of course included. He is received and welcomed into a fellowship which is characterised by the bestowment of all blessing through the operation of the Father's love. It is not merely that the believer henceforth has no fear of God, and so is at peace with Him ; it is that he now has free access to the Divine presence, because he stands in favour at the court of heaven. The word more than suggests, it declares that familiar intimacy, between the believer and God, is the result of justification. This word perhaps more forcefully than any other in this connection, reveals the depth and thoroughness of the work of justification. It is infinitely more than that of forgiving sins in the sense of consenting to say no more about them. Before any one can have such free and familiar fellowship with God as is indicated by the use of the word "grace,"

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sin must be dealt with in the way revealed by the previous teaching of the epistle.

Yet another privilege of the individual is that of the hope of the glory of God. A sinner justified, and therefore standing in favour, enters into a new realm of aspiration and hope. The ultimate issue of all the work of God comes into view, that great glory of God which is to be realised through the work of Christ. In that, the justified soul henceforth finds its reason of joy. Having entered into experimental possession of the values of the work accomplished by Christ at His first advent, nothing can shake the confidence of the soul in the certainty of the ultimate triumph resulting therefrom, and to be manifested at the second advent.

These are the individual privileges of the justified soul. Such an one stands in favour, and hears for evermore the song of the coming glory.

The responsibilities resulting from such privileges exactly correspond to them. To

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stand in grace necessarily includes the consciousness of peace with God ; that is, there is no more strife, no more fear, but a quiet assurance of harmony which is in itself of the essence of peace. The great question between the soul and God is settled through the work of Christ, and peace is the consciousness of the settlement. Therefore, our responsibility is expressed in the words, "Let us have peace." It is the plea of the apostle that we should enter into our privileges, and realise them. It is his solemn warning against the permission of any of those things which break the fellowship, spoil the harmony, and create the consciousness of shame or fear.

The hope of the glory of God includes the responsibility of rejoicing. If we really have the anointed vision which sees through the travail to the triumph, and is perfectly assured of the ultimate victory of God, it is our duty in the midst of the travail to rejoice evermore, to cheer the battle by song, and shorten the marches by music.

There is the closest relationship between

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these responsibilities. It is when peace is interfered with, that joy departs.

β. Temporal

Turning to the discussion of the privileges, which we speak of as temporal because they have reference more immediately to the circumstances of the present, we find that the apostle first stated the responsibility, and after dealing with it at length in a parenthesis, he declared the privilege. It may be well here at once to put these two things together before proceeding to the more general examination of the passage. The temporal responsibility is expressed in the words, "Let us rejoice in tribulation"; while the privilege is declared in the affirmation, "We also rejoice . . . through . . . reconciliation."

All life is changed in its meaning to the justified soul, and therefore tribulation is found to be of such a nature as to cause the heart to rejoice. Most wonderful indeed, is such a declaration. No other philosophy of life has even suggested such a

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possibility to the heart of man. Others have declared that suffering, being the common lot of humanity, must be quietly and stoically borne, but this is a very different matter from that of rejoicing in tribulation. So wonderful an experience is it that the apostle took time to deal with it.

He first showed the reason for such rejoicing to be that of the character which it produces. He traced the process through which man comes to that character. "Tribulation worketh steadfastness," or as Dr. Moule has finely rendered it, "patient persistence." This is not the attitude of one submitting to the inevitable, and hardening the heart against pain. It is rather that of one who, having caught the vision of the ultimate issue in glory, patiently endures the process of the fire, in the joy of the certainty of that issue.

Such steadfastness, or patient persistence, in turn issues in proof, that is in experimental proof, even here and now, of the value of tribulation. Such proof in turn strengthens and confirms hope.

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Hope however, is always supposed to have in it the element of uncertainty. The apostle recognised this fact when speaking of Abraham, he said, "Who in hope believed against hope"; and the words of the Preacher are constantly quoted, "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick." But the hope which results from the process described is not of this kind. In this case, "hope putteth not to shame."

That statement led the apostle to declare that the ground of hope is that of the love of God "shed abroad in our hearts" by the Holy Spirit. That love is the unanswerable argument for the ultimate realisation of the hope. It is the certainty of that love therefore, which induces the patience, adduces the proof, and produces the hope.

There can be no question of that love. It is finally demonstrated in Christ both by His death and by His life. The apostle's argument here may thus be summarised; The love of God; That love proven by Christ's death; Man justified by blood and so saved from wrath; This being so, it is

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certain that he will also be saved in the life of Christ.

Thus the immediate privilege of justification in the midst of all the stress and strain of life, is that we rejoice in God because of that reconciliation to Him which is the result of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Such rejoicing while partaking of the nature of thankfulness for all He has done, is greatly increased by the consequent certainty that He will perfect His purposes in us, in spite of, and often by means of, the tribulations through which we pass.

2. <i>Racial Values.</i>	V. 12-21
<i>a. The Trespass and the free Gift.</i>	12-15
The Comparison.	
Sin entered. By one man.	
The free Gift. Of one Man.	
The Disparity. "Much more."	
<i>β. Judgment and Justification.</i>	16-19
The Comparison.	
Judgment. Of one.	
Justification. Through One.	
The Disparity. "Much more."	
<i>γ. The Reign of Death. The Reign of Grace.</i>	20, 21
The Comparison.	
As Sin reigned.	
So might Grace reign.	
The Disparity. "More exceedingly."	

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2. *Racial Values*

Turning from the discussion of the personal to that of the racial values of justification, the apostle dealt with them by a series of remarkable contrasts, in a passage which is at once one of the most sublime, most difficult, and most debatable in the New Testament.

Broadly stated, it consists of one great contrast, that between Adam and Jesus, as to their race headship, and the results produced by each. That one contrast falls into three sections ; the contrast between the trespass and the free gift: the contrast between judgment and justification ; the contrast between the reign of death and the reign of grace. In each of these he made comparison between the two, and indicated a disparity.

The whole argument is based upon the literal accuracy of the account of the fall of man as it is found in Genesis, there being no less than nine references thereto in so short a passage. Evidently, unless

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that account be true, Paul's interpretation of the work of Jesus is at fault. The accuracy of Genesis, and the accuracy of Romans, stand or fall at the same moment.

The first contrast is between the trespass and the free gift. The comparisons are those between the one man through whom sin entered, and the one Man through Whom the gift of grace was provided; the entry of sin through the one man, and the provision of the gift through the one Man; the death sentence upon sin, and grace abounding. The disparity is indicated by the phrase "much more," in which the apostle shows that the free gift of righteousness was more than adequate for the correction of the trespass.

The second contrast is between the issue of the trespass and the free gift, and therefore between judgment and justification. The comparison is between the judgment that followed the sin of one, and the justification provided as the result of many trespasses, but "through the One even Jesus Christ." The disparity is again indicated by the

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phrase "much more"; and the superabounding victory of justification is remarkably indicated by the fact that judgment means the reign of death over men, while justification means the ability of men to reign in life.

The final contrast is between the reign of death and the reign of grace. The comparisons are again between the one through whom the trespass came, and the One through Whom the free gift came; the sinners made by the one's disobedience, and the righteous made through the obedience of the One; the reign of sin in death, and the reign of grace through righteousness unto life. Again the disparity is marked by the phrase "more exceedingly," revealing the fact that in grace overwhelming provision is made for victory over sin.

Thus the three contrasts make the contrast between Adam and Jesus most vivid. While the comparisons reveal this, the disparity in each case makes it even more apparent. In the case of the first, dis-

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obedience issued in sin, judgment, condemnation, death for the race. In the case of the second, obedience issued in grace, justification, righteousness, life for the race. These are co-extensive. As far as the evil results of Adam's sin have spread, so far do the benefits of the work of Jesus extend. From this conclusion there is no possibility of escape. To read any smaller meaning into the statements used in the one case than in the other, is not only unfair, it is dishonest. If this great passage means anything, it clearly declares that it is now possible for every human being to escape from the result of the work of either by choosing relationship to the other. By faith in Jesus, man can be set free from all the results of the disobedience of Adam. By continuity in the disobedience of Adam man is excluded from the values of the work of Jesus.

ii. SANCTIFICATION.	vi.-viii. 17
a. THE PROVISION ANNOUNCED. From Death into Life.	vi.-vii. 6
I. <i>The Deliverance of Grace.</i>	vi. 1-14
a. <i>Introductory Question and Answer.</i>	1, 2
β. <i>The Scheme described.</i>	3-14
Union with Christ—As to Purpose.	3-11
The Figure of Baptism.	3, 4
Into Death.	
Through Death.	
Into Life.	
The Fact of Unity.	5-11
Stated.	5
Elaborated.	6-8
Crucifixion.	6, 7
Resurrection.	8
Applied.	9-11
Christ.	9, 10
Believers.	11
Union with Christ—As to Practice.	12-14
Sin disowned.	12, 13a
God enthroned.	13b
Grace triumphant.	14

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ii. SANCTIFICATION

If in the structure of the apostle's argument, justification is the foundation, then sanctification is the main building. Or to change the figure, if justification, in the experience of the individual, results from the appropriation by faith of the values of the work of Christ, sanctification results from appropriation of the virtues of the same work. The apostle's method of dealing with sanctification is similar to that adopted with reference to justification. The section falls into three parts; in the first of which the provision is announced; in the second the principle is illustrated; and in the third the privileges are described.

a. THE PROVISION ANNOUNCED

In another of his epistles Paul declared that the will of God for His people is that of their sanctification, and it must ever be remembered that the immediate purpose of justification is sanctification, as its ultimate purpose is glorification. Turning to the

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discussion then of this most important subject, the apostle dealt with it as to its experimental possibility, and as to our corresponding responsibility. The section thus falls into two parts; the first dealing with the deliverance of grace; and the second with the obligation of grace.

1. *The Deliverance of Grace*

The introductory question and answer follow immediately upon the completed argument concerning justification, and are vitally connected therewith. The last words in the argument were, "As sin reigned in death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." The opposing principles of action recognised are those of faith in Jesus, and continuity in sin. The question now is as to whether both of these can govern life. By emphasising the "we" in this inquiry, "Shall *we* continue in sin?" the force of the apostle's question is at once revealed. We have believed, and by such belief have come into

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relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Can we continue in sin, and so retain our relationship with the first man? Emphatically the apostle answers, "God forbid"; and his next question illustrated and emphasised his conclusion. "We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?"

"We . . . died to sin"; in that act of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, which was at once a confession of our sense of condemnation, and of our confidence in the perfection of God's provision; and in that act of faith, we were set free from our relationship to sin. With that the apostle dealt more fully subsequently. Upon the basis of that assumption, however, he asked his question, How can we live in that to which we have died?

In the use of the words "dead" and "alive," there is evidence of the merging of the thought of the apostle into the great subject of sanctification. Justification is the value provided through His death, and appropriated by our identification with Him therein by faith. Sanctification is wrought

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out in the sphere of His life, into which we are introduced through the gateway of His death. To this positive aspect of salvation, the apostle next directed the attention of those to whom he wrote.

Sanctification results directly from identification with Christ in death and resurrection; and the argument deals with the subject of union with Christ as to the purpose of God; and as to the practice of the saints.

The apostle took the figure of baptism as the symbol of death and resurrection. In the rite of baptism there are two movements which may be described as immersion and emergence. Immersion is the symbol of death and burial. Emergence is the symbol of resurrection and life. When the apostle declared, "We were buried with Him through baptism unto death," he of course referred to that work of the Spirit whereby in answer to faith men enter into actual relationship with Christ. Of that work of the Spirit there is no symbol so perfect as that of water

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baptism. The individual placed within its embrace is absolutely in the place of death. The same person emerging therefrom comes actually into the region of life. While the figure is eloquent, the fact is profounder.

It is of importance that we should bear in mind the reflexive character of the work of Christ and that of the Holy Spirit. Christ came to make possible the baptism of the Spirit. This His forerunner distinctly declared. This He claimed Himself unequivocally. The Spirit into Whom man, believing on Jesus, is baptized, becomes to that man the power of death with regard to all the life of sin, because He admits him into identification with the values of the work Christ accomplished in order that He might make possible this very baptism of the Spirit. In brief, Jesus came to bestow the Spirit upon men in order to bring them into union with Himself.

The essential baptism therefore is that great act of God, in which justification through the death of Christ is made the

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possession of the believer, as the believer is placed in the position of identification with that death.

It is yet more. It is the act of God whereby the resurrection life of Jesus is made the possession of the believer for sanctification.

Following his use of the figure of baptism the apostle dealt carefully with the fact of union, which the figure illustrates ; first by the simple and yet inclusive statement, "If we have become united with Him by the likeness of His death, we shall be also by the likeness of His resurrection" ; and then by the elaboration of that statement, both on the side of crucifixion and of resurrection ; finally applying the truth, as he declared that in Christ's death He ended the dominion of sin, and entered into the life unto God ; and charging upon believers the responsibility of reckoning themselves as sharing with Christ both the death unto sin and the life unto God.

This naturally led to a more careful statement as to what this union with

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Christ meant as to the practice of the believer. In this argument everything depends upon that which had been already stated; the initial "Therefore," of the passage indicating this fact.

Because the believer is identified with Christ in death and in life, a double responsibility rests upon him.

The negative side of that responsibility is first stated. Sin is to be entirely disowned. It is not to be permitted to reign, even in the mortal body. Sin does so reign when the lusts of the mortal body are obeyed. These lusts are not in themselves sinful. They are the proper and natural desires of the material life. When however, they become the dominant factors, instead of the ministering servants, then sin reigns. The mastery of the life by the desires of the body is no longer necessary because of the new life possessed in Christ. To allow sin therefore to reign is at once contrary to the purpose of God, and unnecessary, because of the power possessed by the believer.

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The positive side of the responsibility is then dealt with. God is to be enthroned. The whole new man is to be yielded to Him, and the members are to become instruments of righteousness unto Him. This is a matter which needs the most careful statement, as an understanding of it is of vital importance to all true Christian life. The dedication enjoined to the will of God is not that of a sinning man, in order that he may procure salvation. It is rather that of the saved man, in order that he may serve. We are called to present ourselves not in order to obtain life, but "as alive from the dead." Sin is not to be permitted to reign. God alone is now King. The members of the body are therefore to be the instruments of accomplishing His purposes of righteousness. They must never be used simply in obedience to their own desire, and without reference to the glory of God.

This is the distinctive excellence of the Christian position. Grace reigns triumph-

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antly. The believer is not a sinner under law, proving his weakness by perpetual failure; he is rather a saint under grace, proving Christ's power in constant victory.

2. <i>The Obligation of Grace.</i>	vi. 15-vii. 6
<i>a. Introductory Question and Answer.</i>	vi. 15
<i>β. The Figure of the Bond-slave.</i>	16-23
A Principle.	16
The Application.	17-22
The two Positions.	17, 18
Ye were . . . Servants of Sin.	
Ye became . . . Servants of Righteousness.	
The two Practices.	19
Ye presented your members.	
Present your members.	
The two Products.	20-22
Fruit. No righteousness. Death.	
Fruit. Sanctification. Life.	
Summary.	23
<i>γ. The Figure of Marriage.</i>	vii. 1-6
A Principle.	1-3
The Application.	4-6
{ Death to Law through Death of Law in Christ.	
{ Joined to Christ through Resurrection of Christ.	
{ Change of Centre of Responsibility from Law to Christ.	

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2. *The Obligation of Grace*

The greatness of the deliverance provided by grace creates a grave responsibility on the part of those receiving the benefits. With this new obligation the apostle deals by the use of two figures, that of the bond-slave, and that of marriage.

α. Introductory Question and Answer

So complete is the provision of grace that it is possible that some one may say, that seeing we are no longer under law, our responsibility about sin is at an end. That possibility is recognised in the introductory question and answer. It is stated in the form of the inquiry, "What then? shall we sin, because we are not under law, but under grace?" and is at once emphatically, comprehensively, and finally answered in the apostolic exclamation, "God forbid."

β. The Figure of the Bondslave

The new obligation is then first set forth under the familiar figure of the bond-slave.

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In the statement of principle with which the argument opens, the apostle both suggested the illustration and applied it. Bond-slaves are responsible to their masters. The freedom of the will is recognised in the matter of the choice of masters, but when the choice is made, it must be remembered that the service rendered depends entirely upon the master chosen.

Proceeding to make application of his figure, he did so with great care as he showed the two positions, the two practices, and the two products possible, by contrasting the past life of believers with their present life. As to the two positions, they were servants of sin ; they became servants of righteousness. As to the two practices, they depended entirely upon the two positions. When servants of sin, they presented their members to uncleanness and to iniquity ; now that they are the servants of righteousness they are to present their bodies to righteousness unto sanctification. The two products result by a necessary sequence from the practices. When they presented their

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members as servants of uncleanness their fruit was that they were “free in regard of righteousness”; that is, they had no righteousness, and consequently death was the issue. Now, being made free from that service, and having become the servants of God, their fruit is unto sanctification, and the end eternal life.

Or to state the argument in other words. The servant of sin is the slave of sin. The servant of righteousness is the bond-servant of righteousness. The past experience of the service of sin was that of yielding themselves thereto, with the issue that they were mastered thereby. The present experience of the servants of righteousness must be that of the yielding of themselves thereto, with the issue of being mastered thereby. Sin is no longer to be the master, for from it those are made free who have a new master, to whom service is to be rendered. The old fruit of unrighteousness and death is destroyed, but the new fruit of sanctification and life must result.

At the close of this statement we have

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the declaration so often quoted, and so full of glorious meaning, "the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Sin as the master of the life pays the wage of death in every department thereof. God as the Master of life bestows the gift of eternal life in Christ Jesus the Lord, in every department of the life. The contrast is not merely that of ultimate issues. It has reference to the whole process. Death now and for ever is the issue of sin. Eternal life now and for ever is the issue of that obedience which results from faith. God begins with life bestowed as a free gift, and that life is at once a root principle, an impelling force, and a final fruitage; for it is not merely life, but age-abiding life, which He thus freely bestows.

Thus the believer is seen to be no longer in the place of bondage to sin, and no longer needing to yield to every demand of the lusts of the flesh; but now henceforth as the bond-servant of God yields to the call of righteousness, and thus using the

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whole body as the instrument of the will of God, makes it the medium for the manifestation of the sanctified life.

γ. *The Figure of Marriage*

The relation of the justified believer to the law is not merely that of a bond-slave to a master. There are elements in the union which are closer, and the apostle now adopted a new and perhaps more delicate figure, that namely, of the marriage relationship and obligation. He uses it as an illustration of changed relationship. The whole argument may be summarised by the declaration that the believer is freed from the covenant of law by death, and brought into a covenant with Christ by life.

The underlying principle of the illustration is that death puts an end to all responsibility resulting from a covenant. A woman is bound by covenant to her husband. Nothing can end the responsibilities of such a covenant except death. If however the first husband die, then she is free from that covenant, and may

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enter into a new one with a second husband. An examination of this passage compels us to recognise the apparent breakdown of the apostle's figure. He started by the assumption that the law stands in the place of the husband, and that the sinner occupies that of the wife. The teaching of the figure is that so long as the husband lives, the wife is under his dominion by covenant. If she break that covenant, she is under penalty of death. On the other hand, if he die, she is free to enter into the marriage relationship with another. Now the apostle's argument is not that the sinner is set free by the death of the law, for the law does not die. In the application of the principle it is the sinner who, occupying the place of the wife, and having broken the covenant with law, must die.

Wherein then is the value of the figure? It can only be discovered as we remember that Christ was first of all the Fulfiller of the law, Himself being its Incarnation and Embodiment, and in that way all its rights were vested in Him. If the law is taken

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as representing the first husband, and Christ as representing the second, we must now come to see that the sinner is under the death penalty, for breaking the law as ultimately revealed in Christ; but Christ as the perfect One, Fulfiller of law, Embodiment of its ideals, Incarnation of its holiness, takes the death penalty which should fall upon the sinner, and dies, thus cancelling the penalty due to the sinner.

The death of Christ is not the final fact however. He was raised from the dead, and now takes that sinner,—whose breaking of the covenant with Him as law issued in death, which death He has died,—into the place of a new union with Himself. The sinner breaks the covenant of obedience to Christ the Holy One. Christ dies instead of the sinner. Christ rises and marries the sinner, having satisfied His own claim as the Holy One.

If at first therefore, it seems as though the apostle's figure had broken down, this closer examination reveals the fact that by the very change in his metaphor, he gave

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the most exact illustration of the true facts of the case. The sinner has violated the covenant of law, and consequently the law as the first husband, proceeds to demand the sentence of death upon the guilty one. Then Christ in infinite graciousness takes the responsibility of that violated law upon Himself, and suffers the death penalty, righteously inflicted by law. Emerging therefrom He brings the sinner through death out of that responsibility to the law resulting from the broken covenant, into relationship with Himself in a new covenant. Thus there is a change of the centre of responsibility from the law to Christ.

The perfection of the figure is emphasised by that to which we have already drawn attention, that Christ is in Himself the Master and Embodiment of law, so that His emergence into life, bringing with Him the rescued sinner, does not leave an angry and disappointed law behind, but in recognition of all its claims, magnifies it and makes it honourable.

The value of this teaching is evident.

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The figure of the bond-slave teaches us that a change of masters must produce a change of service. The marital figure reveals the fact that a change of covenant changes the centre of responsibility.

b. THE PRINCIPLE ILLUSTRATED. Death under Law.	vii. 7-25
1. <i>Introductory Question and Answer.</i>	7a
2. <i>The Autobiographical Illustration.</i>	7b-24
a. <i>Condition before Law.</i>	7b-9a
Without knowledge of Sin.	7b
(For example. "Coveting."	7c, 8)
Alive.	9a
β. <i>The Coming of Law and Result.</i>	9b-13
The Discovery of Sin.	9b, 10
The Activity of Sin.	11
The Conviction of Sin.	12, 13
γ. <i>The Experience under Law.</i>	14-24
The Slavery of Sin.	14-20
The Conflict.	21-23
The Agony.	24
3. <i>The Summary.</i>	25
a. <i>The Triumphant Answer.</i>	
β. <i>The State needing the Victory.</i>	

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b. THE PRINCIPLE ILLUSTRATED

Having thus dealt with the subject of sanctification as a work of grace ; showing how the great deliverance is wrought, of what nature it is, and what are the obligations it entails ; the apostle prepared the way for a description of the sanctified life on its experimental side, by a personal confession or statement. Around this remarkable section controversy has long waged, the most scholarly and devout expositors differing in their view as to the period in the life of Paul, which he herein described. That which seems perfectly plain to one is almost vehemently denied by another. Into all the discussion it is not ours to enter. I give in my analysis what seems to me to be the only interpretation which is in harmony with the whole movement. Those who differ will at least be patient.

There are two initial matters to which it may be well to draw attention before considering the section in detail. The fact that the passage is personal and experimental

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is indicated in the change from the plural to the singular in the use of personal pronouns. In all the preceding argument the apostle had been dealing with general doctrines. He now illustrated them from his own experience. Half-way through the passage the tense changes. In the first part the apostle wrote in the past tense. In the second he used the present tense. This fact has been one cause of the differences of opinion to which I have referred already.

There are those who believe that in the first part he described his experiences as a devout Hebrew before his apprehension by Christ; and that when he adopted the present tense he described his experience after his justification, but before he entered into the experience of sanctification. I can only say that such interpretation would lead me to the conviction that justification produced no change in his experience, save perhaps a deepened consciousness of his sinfulness and weakness. That interpretation would make justification a matter merely of legal standing, and suggest that

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ability results from sanctification. That in turn, would be to declare that regeneration, or the new birth, does not take place at justification. This however would entirely contradict the teaching of the apostle concerning the privileges and responsibilities of justification, as set forth in the fifth chapter.

And yet the change of tense is most marked, and we need to recognise it. For a full discussion of the matter, the reader would do well to consult Dr. Agar Beet's "Commentary" on this epistle. I confine myself to one quotation therefrom :

"The past and present tenses are distinguished not only in time but as different modes of viewing the occasion. The past tense looks upon it as already complete; the present, as going on before our eyes. Consequently, when the time is otherwise determined, the tenses may be used without reference to time."

I treat the whole of this section as describing the experiences of the apostle as a Hebrew, prior to his apprehension by

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Christ. In the first movements he dealt with his experiences as a child, before he became a son of the law; then during the period resulting from his yielding of himself to its claims. So far he wrote in the past tense. Then, desiring to make his description graphic and forceful, he wrote in the present tense, and thus in such a way as to make most telling the helplessness and hopelessness of a man under law. All this is background, preparing the way for that marvellous contrast set forth in the next section.

Therefore I treat this section as a picture of the religious experience of Paul up to the time of his meeting with Christ. It deals with his condition before law; his experience at the coming of law; and his subsequent experience under law.

1. *Introductory Question and Answer*

His contrast between the dominion of the law and the dominion of Christ may produce in the mind of some of his readers the idea that the law itself is sin. This he

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indicated in his inquiry, "Is the law sin?" and once again denied in the emphatic exclamation, "God forbid." The ultimate answer to the inquiry is found in the declaration subsequently made, "We know that the law is spiritual." It is not the law that is sin, but the one who, breaking it, is condemned by it.

2. *The Autobiographical Illustration*

Affirming that he had not known sin except through the law, the apostle declared, "I was alive apart from the law once." The question is at once suggested as to what period of his life he could possibly have referred to when he wrote these words. It goes without saying that they could not refer to a period prior to the historic giving of the law. They must have reference to some time in the actual life of this man. The only satisfactory answer to the inquiry is that he referred to those days of infancy and childhood in which, without consciousness of law, there was no consciousness of sin; and consequently, he lived without

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any sense of distance between himself and God. Whatever powers or possibilities of evil were in his nature—and this is a subject he was not dealing with at the moment—they were not in wilful and active operation; and therefore he was alive apart from law. By way of example he quoted the last of the words of the Decalogue, “Thou shalt not covet,” and declared that he had not known coveting apart from the law. By this he did not mean that as a child he had never desired anything belonging to some one else, but that he had no consciousness that such desire was wrong. It was by the coming of law that he came to conviction of sin, and consequently of responsibility. Thus during the early days of his life he was, apart from the law, alive.

Passing on, he dealt with the coming of law, and again we are led to inquire what he meant by the words, “The commandment came . . . and I died.” He affirmed that when he came to the sense of responsibility to law, sin revived, or came to life, in his experience, and he died.

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In all probability Paul here referred to that actual confirmation service to which every Jewish boy comes, in which he is made a son of the law. To one carefully trained it is perfectly conceivable that such a service would be one of grave solemnity, producing spiritual consideration of the most searching kind ; and here the apostle tells us what the effect was in his own case.

It is impossible to pass this suggestion without thinking of that self-same confirmation in the life of Jesus. He also was alive without the law in all the days of boyhood. To Him also there came the law, when at the age of twelve, presented in the Temple in accordance with the rites of His people, He became a Son of the law. It would have been impossible, however, for Him to write what Paul wrote. To Him the coming of the commandment did not mean the revival or coming to life of sin ; and, consequently, the law to Him was not unto death, but unto life.

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Another point of interest which should not be overlooked here is that the apostle carefully declared what particular commandment it was that brought home to him the sense of sin. He seems to have been able to count himself blameless while nine words of the Decalogue spoke their message to his conscience; but when the tenth word was uttered, "Thou shalt not covet," he discovered at last the point at which he was violating the Divine commandment, and so, to use his own expressive word, he died.

In childhood he lived without consciousness of law, and therefore without consciousness of sin. When at last the age of responsibility came, and he submitted himself to the requirements of the law, he discovered his sin. Most carefully does his statement declare that the law did not cause his death, or make him a sinner. It revealed his condition, and brought him to the consciousness thereof.

The result of that consciousness was the long struggle between opposing forces in

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his own life, and he graphically described that struggle as we have already indicated, by using the present tense. The experience described is that of a devout Hebrew, seeking the highest, refusing to be satisfied with externalities, and therefore telling the story of his own deepest consciousness in all the blunt horror of it, "I am sold under sin." It is an almost startling revelation of the experience of all those who come honestly to the measurement of the law. It is a double experience, that of a man doing hated things, and by his very hatred of them consenting to the goodness of the law which forbids them. The will to do the good is with him, but not the power. He even experiences delight in the law of God, but because of the principle of sin which masters him he is unable to obey.

So terrible is the condition that he breaks out into a cry that tells the whole story of his inner consciousness. To understand that cry aright the exultant note must be omitted, and what remains read

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in close connection. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death? . . . So then I myself with the mind serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."

3. *The Summary*

While thus the apostle wrote the words which revealed the agony of his past condition, he wrote them from his then present sense of victory and deliverance, and so parenthetically answered his own inquiry, "Who shall deliver me?" in the words, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

For me at least no stretch of the imagination is equal to the task of convincing me that this paragraph can be applied to a regenerate man. This man is sold under sin. The regenerate man is redeemed from its power. This man finds within him a law of sin and death, warring against his desire after goodness, and making it impossible for him to do the good. The regenerate man is set free from such

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dominion, because he is able to do that which is good. This man is unable to do what he would. The regenerate man says, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

The objection to this view is mainly based upon the idea that it is impossible to think of an unregenerate man delighting in the law of the Lord.

The first answer to such an objection is that passages are to be found in the writings of pagan philosophers which are so strikingly like this statement of Paul concerning himself as to demonstrate the fact that unregenerate man is capable of admiring the law, but incapable of obeying it. Seneca wrote, "What is it that draws us in one direction while striving to go in another; and impels us toward that which we wish to avoid?" and Euripides declared, "We understand and know the good things, but we do not work them out."

The final answer however, is that Paul was a devout and sincere Hebrew, who

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did know the law, and who did delight in it before his apprehension by Christ; one who according to his own words in another letter, was "as touching the righteousness which is in the law found blameless." It was this man who in all external things satisfied the demands of the law, and thus established the righteousness in which men made their boast, who nevertheless was all the while profoundly conscious of his inability to fulfil its requirements.

The whole paragraph then, is a forceful revelation of the highest possible experience of the life under law, and prepares the way for the description of the power and freedom and triumph of the sanctified life, resulting from the operation of grace through Christ Jesus.

c. THE PRIVILEGE DESCRIBED. LIFE IN THE SPIRIT.	viii. 1-17
1. <i>The Proclamation.</i>	1
a. <i>The State. No Condemnation.</i>	
β. <i>The Sphere. In Christ Jesus.</i>	
2. <i>The Explanation.</i>	2-11
a. <i>The contrasted Sovereignty.</i>	2
The Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus.	
The Law of Sin and Death.	
The Victory in Christ Jesus.	
β. <i>The contrasted Strength.</i>	3, 4
The Weakness of Law.	
The Strength of the Son of God.	
The Victory of the Son of God.	
γ. <i>The contrasted Spheres. Flesh, Spirit.</i>	5-11
The First Contrast—Of Inspiration.	5
After the Flesh.	
After the Spirit.	
The Second Contrast—Of Issue.	6
Of Flesh—Death.	
Of Spirit—Life and Peace.	
The third Contrast—Of Experience.	7-11
The Flesh.	7, 8
At Enmity against God.	
Incapable of Subjection to God.	
Incapable of pleasing God.	
The Spirit.	9-11
The Indweller.	9a
(Parenthesis. A Test.	9b)
The present Position.	10
The Body dead.	
The Spirit alive.	
The Ultimate Victory.	11
The Quickened Body.	
3. <i>The Obligation.</i>	12-17
a. <i>Responsibility.</i>	12, 13
Negative—Not to Flesh.	12, 13a
Positive—By the Spirit.	13b
β. <i>Resource.</i>	14-17
Sonship.	14, 15
Heirship.	16, 17

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C. THE PRIVILEGE DESCRIBED. LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

The final section of this division sets forth the life of sanctification on its positive side. It is perfectly evident that the word "Therefore" is not related to the final statement of the previous section. In order to discover the teaching which the word recalls, it is necessary to go back to the first section, and to its last declaration. That this may be clearly seen, let us bring the last verse of the first section, and this first verse of the third section together.

"But now we have been discharged from the law, having died to that wherein we were holden; so that we serve in newness of the spirit, and not in oldness of the letter."

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus."

The connection is self-evident; "discharged . . . no condemnation." Thus after having in the first section dealt with the provision for sanctification, that of identifi-

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cation with Christ by which the believer passes from death into life ; and having illustrated his principle in that section in which he described the condition of death under law ; he now returned in order to set forth the privilege of sanctification to be that of life in the Spirit.

That to which we now turn stands in startling contrast to that which we have been considering. Throughout the whole of the paragraph of autobiographical illustration, the overwhelming sense was that of condemnation. In this most glorious passage the language is ever that of one discharged, and free from condemnation. From the slavery of the law of sin and death we emerge into the freedom of the law of the Spirit of life.

The section falls into three parts ; a brief proclamation ; a careful explanation ; and a final statement of consequent obligation.

1. *The Proclamation*

In the final stages of the previous section the apostle as though unable to avoid it

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for very gladness of heart, had exclaimed, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." As we saw in considering it, this was an interpolated answer of the man in Christ, to the wail of the man under law.

He now turned to the full and positive statement of the truth which compelled that cry of victory. The opening proclamation is brief but all-inclusive. It rings with the note of absolute assurance. The state of the believer is described in the words, "no condemnation." He has escaped from the intolerable depression of the awful agony resulting from the sense of sin created by the law. This escape is the result of entrance into a new sphere of life, which he described by the words "In Christ Jesus." The omission of the words, "who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit" is no loss, but rather gain. While what they suggest is true, and will be stated presently under the consideration of obligation, the statement is more complete, as a definite proclamation, without them. It is indeed a gracious announce-

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ment that in Christ Jesus man is under no condemnation ; and inspired the great verse in Charles Wesley's hymn,

No condemnation now I dread ;
Jesus, and all in Him, is mine !
Alive in Him, my living Head,
And clothed in righteousness Divine,
Bold I approach the eternal throne,
And claim the crown, through Christ, my own.

2. *The Explanation*

Having thus comprehensively stated the privilege of sanctification, the apostle passed to a careful explanation thereof in a series of contrasts between life in the flesh, and life in the spirit.

My own interpretation of this passage adopts the distinction indicated in the spelling of the Revised Version in the case of the word "spirit." Therein a small letter is used when the word refers to the spirit of man, and a capital when it refers to the Spirit of God. I am aware that some of our best expositors do not agree with the interpretation resulting from this

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spelling. I do not propose to enter into any argument concerning the matter, for I do not believe that anything of vital importance is involved. Let readers desiring to compare other interpretations refer to the works of Dr. Handley Moule, and Dr. Agar Beet. My own understanding of the passage leads me to the conclusion that where the distinction is maintained as indicated in the Revised Version, the result is a clear presentation of the truth that sanctification is the full realisation of the forces of regeneration; and that a picture of remarkable strength is presented, of a regenerate man living under the control of the Spirit of God, his own spirit being restored to its proper place of dominion over his body.

The first contrast is that between the two sovereignties of life. In this relation the word law is used, not in reference to the Mosaic economy, but as describing a master-principle. On the one hand there is that of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, on the other that of the law of sin and of

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death. These two stand related to the two sections of the division already considered, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus having been revealed in the first section, and the law of sin and of death having been dealt with in the second; the law which the apostle therein described as "a different law . . . warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin." If this is the contrast, it is stated only in order to declare that the victory is that the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes us free from the law of sin and of death.

The second contrast is between the ability of the law—and in this case the reference is to the Mosaic economy—and that of the Son of God. The weakness of the one consisted in the fact that it had to do with man as the apostle had described him in the central section, unable to obey. The strength of the Son of God lay in the fact of His incarnation, and His work on the cross, all of which had been dealt with in the first section. Again the contrast is made,

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in order to declare that the victory is that of the Son of God, because in all such as walk not after the flesh but after the spirit, the ordinance or requirement of the law is fulfilled.

In the third contrast which has to do with the two possible spheres of life, flesh and spirit, the overwhelming victory of sanctification is revealed. There is a three-fold movement in this contrast, dealing with the two inspirations, the two issues, and the two experiences.

As to inspiration, there are those who live after the flesh, and those who live after the spirit. The first mind the things of the flesh, that is, desire them, and seek after them. The second mind the things of the spirit, and again that is, desire them, and seek after them.

As to issue, the result of seeking the things of the flesh is death, a present death, the death of the mind, its darkness and limitation. The result of seeking the things of the spirit is life and peace, present life and peace, the life of the mind, its light

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and comprehension resulting in abiding peace.

Finally in dealing with the contrast of experience the apostle first declared that to live in the flesh is to be at enmity against God, incapable of subjection to Him, and therefore unable to please Him. His description of the experience of life in the spirit is fuller. Declaring that the secret of spiritual life is that of the indwelling Spirit of God, he parenthetically declared that this indwelling Spirit of God will be manifest as the Spirit of Christ, and that this manifestation is a test of possession. The immediate result of the indwelling Christ is that the body is dead, that is to say, the body does not immediately escape the consequence of past sin ; it is still mortal, not exempt from dissolution. But the spirit is alive, and that fact will have its bearing upon the whole man, including the body.

In this connection there is finally one word declaring that the ultimate victory of this life will be that of the quickening of the mortal body.

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This picture then is that of a regenerate man. Sanctification is the full realisation of regeneration, and consists in the spirit of a man being in subjection to the indwelling Spirit of God ; with the further result that the body of the man is under the dominion of the spirit of the man, which is controlled by the Spirit of God.

3. *The Obligation*

The argument as to obligation immediately follows, and of course is entirely dependent upon that which has already been considered. The apostle stated it in relation to our responsibility and our resource.

The negative responsibility of believers is that they are not debtors to the flesh. There is no longer any need for them to live after the flesh, that is, to obey the dictates of the flesh without reference to the claims of the spirit. Being free from the law of sin and death which operates through the body, making it the master of the life ; to yield to its claims alone will

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issue in death. The first responsibility of sanctification is that there shall be no such yielding. The positive responsibility is that of the exercise of power by the spirit over all the things of the flesh.

In order to the fulfilment of this responsibility the resources of sanctification are then stated. The first is that of sonship. The victory of the spirit of man results from the leading of the Spirit of God, and those who have such leading are the sons of God. They have received the spirit of adoption whereby they are able, under the tender and gracious impulse of the indwelling Spirit, to call God, Father. The witness of the Spirit of God with our spirits that we are the children of God is the proof necessary, and granted, of our justification and sanctification. All the logical method is nothing save as we have this inner witness, the absolutely certain knowledge, proof against all argument, that we are the children of God.

The sequence of this glorious sonship is that the saints are heirs of God. This

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statement is so overwhelming that it defies analysis, or exposition. In the presence of it the heart can but be still in exulting meditation, while it confesses that the profundities of the Divine love defy the fathoming of human intelligence.

O love of God, how strong and true,
Eternal and yet ever new,
Uncomprehended and unbought,
Beyond all knowledge and all thought.

O love of God, how deep and great !
Far deeper than man's deepest hate ;
Self-fed, self-kindled, like the light,
Changeless, eternal, infinite.

Children are heirs of the Father's wealth and the Father's home. And yet the apostle kept plainly in view the ground of our claim. We are joint-heirs with Christ. He Who identifies Himself with us in death, identifies us with Himself in life, and in all that life means as to breadth, and richness, and continuity.

This joint-heirship with Christ, and heirship of God, brings us into fellowship, not only with the consummation, but with

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the process. We are brought into the place of suffering with Him, Who came into the fellowship of our suffering. This statement of the case reveals responsibility. The privilege is evidenced by the declaration of the same truth from the other side. Having fellowship with His suffering through the process, we shall at last have partnership with the glory in the consummation.

iii. GLORIFICATION.	viii. 18-39
a. THE FELLOWSHIP IN THE PROCESS.	18-30
1. <i>Introductory Declaration.</i>	18
<i>Present Suffering and ultimate Glory incomparable.</i>	
2. <i>Fellowship with Creation.</i>	19-30
a. <i>Fellowship in Creation's Groaning.</i>	19-25
Creation's Need.	19-22
Waiting.	19, 20
Hoping.	21
Groaning.	22
The Saints' Fellowship.	23-25
Groaning.	23a
Waiting.	23b
Hoping.	24, 25
β. <i>Fellowship with God.</i>	26-30
The Spirit's Interpretation.	26, 27
Making Intercession with Groanings.	26
Intelligible to God.	27a
According to God.	27b
The Saints' Assurance.	28-30
The Conditions.	28a
The Process.	28b
The Issue.	29, 30
b. THE ASSURANCE OF THE CONSUMMATION.	31-39
1. <i>Introductory Affirmation.</i>	31, 32
a. <i>The Inquiry.</i>	31
What shall we say?	
If God . . . who is against?	
β. <i>The Answer.</i>	32
The Gift of the Son.	
The Gift of all things.	
2. <i>The Threefold Challenge and Answer.</i>	33-39
a. <i>The Accuser.</i>	33
Challenge. Who?	
Answer. God justifies.	
β. <i>The Judge.</i>	34
Challenge. Who?	
Answer. Christ Died.	
Rose.	
Ascended.	
Intercedes.	
<i>The Separator.</i>	35-39
Challenge. Who?	35-36
The things of suffering.	
The Answer. The Love of God in Christ Jesus.	37-39
The incompetent Forces.	

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iii. GLORIFICATION

The last phrase in the previous section, “glorified with Him” naturally leads on to the discussion of the final fact in the salvation provided by God, that of glorification. There is nothing like a detailed description of the conditions of the coming glory, either on earth or in heaven. The apostle’s dealing with the subject was rather that of an onward look from the midst of that suffering to which he had referred, and which is seen in the light of the consummation. The section falls into two parts; the first dealing with the fellowship of the saints in the process that leads to the consummation; and the second with the assurance of the certainty of that consummation.

a. THE FELLOWSHIP IN THE PROCESS

After an introductory declaration the apostle proceeded to deal with the subjects, first of the fellowship of the saints with

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creation ; and secondly of their fellowship with God.

1. *Introductory Declaration*

In his introductory declaration the apostle suggested and declined a comparison between the sufferings and the glory. So stupendous and overwhelming was the radiant vision and the ultimate issue of the work of grace as he saw it, that set in the light of it, he reckoned the sufferings of the present time incomparable. All that follows in this section emphasises that conviction. It is impossible to read his teaching without discovering how keen his sense of the suffering was, and yet through all the movement the dominant note is that of a joyful confidence, born of his assurance of the certainty and overwhelming sufficiency of the glory.

2. *Fellowship with Creation*

In dealing with the fellowship of the saints with creation the apostle affirmed the fact of their fellowship in creation's

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groaning ; and then that of their fellowship with God in relation to that groaning.

a. Fellowship in Creation's Groaning

The apostle first described creation's need, and then the saints' fellowship therein.

The need of creation as the apostle understood it is revealed by three words of which he made use. He saw it, waiting, hoping, groaning.

It is waiting "for the revealing of the sons of God." In that declaration the apostle recognised man's place in creation to be that of its lord and master. He also recognised that man's power to exercise beneficent rule results entirely from his relation to God. That relation being interfered with by sin, he had failed to realise the creation beneath him, or to lead it to its full development. The creation had therefore been subjected to vanity.

He next described it as expecting, or hoping, that it would also find its way into the liberty of the glory of the children

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of God, that is, that in answer to the dominion of redeemed man it also would be redeemed.

Finally he taught that while creation thus waits and hopes it does so in suffering. This he declared in the words, "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain . . . until now." How much of sorrow and of agony is pressed into this one pregnant sentence! It includes man himself in his spiritual ruin, in his mental limitation, in his physical suffering; and all the lower forms of creation in their sighing and suffering for lack of the kingly government of the being created to have dominion over it for its perfecting.

In dealing with the saints' fellowship, the apostle made use of the same words, groaning, waiting, hoping.

He began at the point of creation's pain, as he declared that "we ourselves groan." The saints of God in the midst of the suffering are conscious of it, and, indeed, the consciousness is more acute than that of the creation itself, for with

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the restoration in measure even, of the Divine ideal, there comes the new capacity for pain, which is indeed part of the privilege of partnership with God in Christ.

The saints are also waiting for the redemption of the body. The bodies of the saints have not yet been brought into full realisation of the renewing forces of salvation. They remain the media through which the saints experimentally enter into the consciousness of creation's suffering. Nevertheless the spirit is renewed and alive, and in their spiritual life the saints wait for the redemption of the body.

While in the midst of this fellowship of suffering and of waiting they also share the hope of creation, and that hope is so sure and certain as to create patience in waiting, even in the midst of suffering.

β. Fellowship with God

The deeper secret of the fellowship of the saints with creation is that of their fellowship with God. The indwelling Spirit

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exercises a twofold ministry in this respect ; that first of interpreting the real meaning of the world's agony, and that secondly of creating the assurance of the ultimate deliverance. The supreme consciousness of suffering is in God, because of the perfection of His love. He, by the Spirit indwelling believers, interprets that consciousness, and thus makes their intercession. That intercession even though it cannot be expressed, is intelligible to God, because "He . . . knoweth . . . the mind of the Spirit." This intercession is therefore "according to the will of God." By this interpretation of the Spirit, the saints are brought into fellowship with the suffering of creation through fellowship with God ; and they co-operate with God by intercession in the midst of suffering creation.

Such fellowship with God creates the assurance of the saints that the whole process is moving toward a consummation. "We know" wrote the apostle. Here is no indefiniteness, no speculation, no ex-

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pression of a hope that faints or falters. Upon the basis of the profound and magnificent arguments of the Divine method of redemption, the apostle founds a confidence that nothing is equal to shaking. In an introductory phrase, "to them that love God," he indicated the one condition upon which all that he was about to say concerning the process to consummation, is true. The confidence he expressed in the present tense, "all things work"; they do so even here and now, amid conditions which seem as though they would make the ultimate issue impossible, or at least indefinitely postpone it. The soul in fellowship with God rests assured that everything is contributing to the consummation.

The word "together" is in itself a luminous explanation of much that perplexes. No lonely circumstance, no event of an hour, no isolated incident, must be used as interpreting the whole process. All such circumstances, events, incidents, are inter-related, and each must be viewed as part of all. The apparent defeat is

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a preparation for certain victory. The seeming mystery holds within itself in relation to other facts, the making of a revelation. The present is part of the whole. The whole needs it, and alone is equal to explaining it. This is the faith that tinges the darkest cloud with the light of the sun hidden behind it, and transmutes its sable into the purple promise of coming glory. This is the confidence that whispers words of infinite peace amid all the babel of contending voices. This is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith, and faith is at once the law and the offspring of fellowship.

What then is the good toward which the "all things" work together? We find the answer to this inquiry stated only in regard to the central fact. The sons are to be conformed to the image of the Son. This revealing of the sons of God in the likeness of the Son of God will issue in the healing of creation, and the ending of its groaning.

There can be no doubt that at last the sons will be conformed to the image of

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the Son, for to this they are foreordained of God, and those “whom He foreordained, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified.”

Thus the great glad certainty of assured finality of glory, accounts for the statement with which the section opened. “I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to usward.”

b. THE ASSURANCE OF THE CONSUMMATION

The last section ended with the apostle's affirmation of the assurance of the saints in fellowship with God, that the process is inevitably moving toward the consummation. This second half of the division dealing with glorification looks out into the future, and challenges all opposition, affirming its impotence in the presence of the great salvation.

It is sometimes helpful to read this paragraph in close connection with the first section of the book, that dealing with the

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ruin of the race. There the apostle declared that the whole world must be silent in its condemnation. Here the saints are no longer silent, but challenge to silence all the voices that can be raised against them.

The first movement in the paragraph is that of an introductory affirmation, which is immediately followed by a threefold challenge and answer.

1. *Introductory Affirmation*

The introductory affirmation consists of an all-inclusive inquiry and reply. The attention is first arrested by the question, "What then shall we say to these things?" which is immediately followed by the inquiry, "If God is for us, who is against us?" Already he had demonstrated the fact that the very forces of sorrow and of suffering which seemed to be opposed, are working together for good. In the light of that assurance he looked out through all space and all ages, and demanded "Who is against us?"

The answer is really an exposition of the

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assumption of the inquiry, that God is for us. He has proved that He is for us by the gift of His Son. It is therefore inconceivable that He will withhold anything. Indeed the gift of the Son is the gift of all things, for as the writer declared in another of his letters, "In Him all things consist."

2. *The Threefold Challenge and Answer*

The inclusive inquiry is then expressed in a threefold challenge, followed by a threefold answer.

The first challenge is as to the possibility of an accuser. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" The answer is immediate and brief, "It is God that justifieth." Nothing more need be said, because in the earlier part of the letter the fact has already been dealt with, that it is possible for God to be just and the justifier of him who believes in Jesus.

The second challenge is as to the possibility of a judge who will condemn, "Who is He that shall condemn?" The answer

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re-states those facts of the work of Christ Jesus, belief in which, made possible the declaration of an earlier section, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus"; the facts of His death, resurrection, ascension, and intercession.

The third challenge is as to the possibility of a separator, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" and the challenge is emphasised by the naming of some of the terrible experiences which may form part of the process through which the ultimate glory must be reached—tribulation, anguish, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword. So far from these being able to separate, in them "we are more than conquerors" because they are of the number of the things which work together for our good, and thus are compelled to serve us, and to co-operate with God toward the accomplishment of the highest purposes of His heart. There are other things which may be against us, and the apostle finally named them only in order to reveal the fact that

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the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, is mightier than either of them, or all of them united, in an attempt to separate us therefrom.

Neither death, the foe ever threatening; nor life, with all its trials and testings; nor angels and principalities, the beings of the spiritual realm; nor powers, those in earthly authority; nor things present, the circumstances of the hour; nor things to come, the possible contingencies of the coming days; nor height, heaven itself; nor depth, hell beneath; nor any other creature can separate us from the love of God, Who is the Creator, and therefore the supreme Lord of all because life is resident in, and manifested through, Christ Jesus, Who is our Lord.

In this final affirmation there is incidentally a fine note of assurance in the little phrase, "any other creature"; for by its use the apostle recognises the fact that all the things which he has named are but creations, while the One in Whose love is the assurance of the victory is the

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One from Whom all these have come, He being the Creator.

This threefold challenge and answer becomes the more wonderful when we realise the remarkable change of relation between God and man which it exhibits. On account of sin, God was against man, and man was silent. Through His salvation God is for him, and the opposing forces are silent. By reason of sin God was the supreme Accuser. By the way of His salvation He has become the Justifier. As the result of sin it was God Who as Judge condemned man. As the outcome of His provision of salvation, the triumphant word is uttered, "No condemnation." The inevitable issue of sin was that God had excluded man from fellowship with Himself. The equally inevitable result of salvation is the restoration of man to such fellowship with Him in love that no force in the universe can separate between them.

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III. OBJECTIONS DISCUSSED

The great subject of the Gospel unto salvation is now completed. The condemnation resulting from sin which created the need for the Gospel has been vividly set forth. The great provision of salvation in its threefold aspect of justification, sanctification, and glorification has been carefully described. Before passing to that application of the truth wherein he dealt with the transformation by salvation, the apostle paused to deal with certain objections. It must be remembered that these objections are such as would be raised by Hebrews, and not by Gentiles. All that the former part of his letter had insisted upon, must inevitably have swept away all possibility of confidence on the part of Israelites in those things in which from birth they had made their boast. It was natural and almost inevitable that such questions as those now to be dealt with, should arise in their minds. Paul, a Hebrew of Hebrews, would naturally be immediately conscious

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of such difficulties, and therefore proceeded to deal with them, in order to show the relation of the new economy to the old, and to demonstrate the fact that there was no departure on the part of God from the perpetual method of His operation, and no injustice in His reception of the Gentile.

He discussed three subjects, those namely of the Divine method of election ; of the rejection of Israel according to the flesh ; and of its ultimate restoration.

i. ELECTION

In dealing with the first difficulty, that namely of God's election of His ancient people, the apostle first laid bare his heart as a Christian Israelite ; and then discussed the subject of election as to its operation, its principle, and its sovereignty.

a. INTRODUCTION

The connection between this very remarkable passage, and the climax of the preceding chapter is close, and we can only

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understand the meaning of the apostle as it is observed.

The great certainty that there can be no separation between the trusting soul and the love of God is the experience of one in close experimental fellowship with the Lord through the ministry of the Spirit. The fulness of spiritual life is that of full consciousness of the mind of Christ. The tides of His life flowing through all the being of the apostle ; his desires, impulses, and activities were those of the Lord Who dwelt in Him. This is the meaning of the opening words of affirmation, "I say the truth in Christ." That which he was about to declare, resulted from the fact that Christ was the sphere of his life. To this affirmation he added weight by claiming the witness of his conscience in the Holy Spirit. This solemn opening affirmation gives us the key to what else were inexplicable ; his great sorrow, his increasing pain, his very desire to be anathema, all resulted from, and indeed were parts of the Christ-consciousness which held and mastered him.

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It was Christ's sorrow, Christ's increasing pain, Christ's readiness to be anathema, of which he was the conscious partner, and to which he now gave expression. No man could have written such words save as he was indwelt and dominated by Christ through the Holy Spirit. No man so indwelt and dominated could escape such consciousness.

The first expression of his Christ-created compassion was toward his brethren. This is a glorious illustration of a perpetual truth. The man who had given up his brethren for Christ's sake, now held them in a new love and compassion, compared with which the old earthly affection was as nothing. The love of kindred and friends which counts their friendship and fellowship as of more value than those of Christ, is after all self-centred, the love of the publican and the sinner, set upon those who love us, because they love us, and on account of what they give us. The love of kindred and friends which results from a supreme love for Christ, is disinterested, and

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goes out to them in spite of the fact that they have ceased to give us anything but persecution and pain. This is true, high, holy love; the love that never fails.

The great value of this passage is discovered when it is remembered that almost all the pain and suffering of the apostle resulted from the bitter hatred and opposition of those very kinsmen whom he had given up for Christ, and for whom he had found a new love through relationship to Him.

With a fine art the apostle approached the discussion of the difficulties of his brethren by a description of Israel according to the Divine economy, which description recognised their high privileges and conspicuous glory.

Looking back, in briefest words he stated the Divinity of the original preparatory economy. Theirs was the adoption,—they were peculiarly called to the relationship of children; the glory,—among them God dwelt, manifesting His presence by the Shekinah splendour; the covenants,—Abra-

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hamic, Mosaic, Davidic ; the giving of the law,—the ethical code ; the service,—all the symbolic ritual of their worship ; the promises,—of the coming King and Kingdom ; the fathers,—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Recognising that all these things were preparatory, and that they had their fulfilment in the mission of Messiah, he then declared that this highest of all glories, that of providing the Messiah on the side of His human life, was theirs also, in the words, “ of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh.” All the former things had pointed to Him, and in Him they found their fulfilment.

Thus ultimately that history of Israel which was Divine in its initiation, was Divine also in its consummation, for the Christ Who, concerning the flesh, came from them, is infinitely more than human, being “ over all, God blessed for ever ” ; and thus the final purpose of their history is stated in a word descriptive of Christ, that purpose being, that God Who is over all, should be blessed for ever.

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b. THE OPERATION OF ELECTION

The word “But” with which this paragraph opens, at once suggests the contrast between the glorious facts concerning Israel which the apostle had recognised, and that of the present experience of Israel which caused him the keen sorrow of which he had written.

It would appear as though the Word of God had come to nought; as though in order to the fulfilment of His purpose, He had violated a principle. It was admitted that He had elected this nation. How then was the fact of their rejection as a nation to be accounted for?

With this problem he proceeded to deal, affirming first that the promises made to Israel were made not to a people after the flesh. This must have been to the ears of a Jew, a most astonishing assertion, and the apostle proceeded to defend it in an unanswerable fashion. Declaring that “they are not all Israel that are of Israel; neither because they are Abraham’s seed

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are they all children," he taught that the operation of election had been that of successive selections from among those springing from one source, so far as the flesh was concerned.

In illustration of this he showed that while Isaac and Ishmael were both related to Abraham, Isaac was the selected child; and that while Jacob and Esau were both sons of Isaac, Jacob was selected. Thus it is evident from the history of Israel from its commencement, that not all the children of Abraham constituted the nation, nor all the children of Isaac. The selection in each case however was not capricious, but based upon an underlying purpose of God, which the apostle described as the purpose of God according to election. What that purpose was, can only be understood as this section of the epistle is perpetually interpreted by the whole scheme of the argument, and by other of the apostolic writings. In referring to the Divine choice of God, when writing to the Ephesians, the apostle said, "He chose us in Him before the

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foundation of the world, *that we should be holy and without blemish before Him in love.*" Thus the purpose of election was character, and therefore from among the children of Abraham according to the flesh, God made selection of such as believed, because through faith, character is formed.

C. THE PRINCIPLE OF ELECTION

TO such a statement as this, objection would at once be raised, and recognising it, the apostle stated it in the form of a question. "Is there unrighteousness with God?" The suggestion of that inquiry is that if a man who may have lived a profligate life is yet to be received, on account of his faith only, while a man whose life has been outwardly moral, is to be cast out on account of unbelief, there is at least the appearance of injustice on the part of God.

Such a question would necessarily be that of some one who had not perfectly understood the early arguments of the letter concerning the sin of man, and the

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provision which God has made for his salvation.

To the supposed difficulty the apostle first replied in an emphatic negative, and then reminded his readers of the Divine declaration to Moses, and so revealed the fact that the underlying principle of the action of God is that of His mercy and compassion. The argument here is for the right of God to extend that mercy according to His own will. Although the deeper facts are not here stated they must not be forgotten, for everything depends upon perpetual recognition of them. God exercises His mercy toward those who believe. That is a statement made elsewhere, and not repeated here, which nevertheless must not be lost sight of, if there is to be any true understanding of this otherwise difficult declaration.

As mercy then is according to the Divine will, so also is judgment; and the apostle illustrated the fact by the case of Pharaoh, of whom he spoke as of one upon whom God did not have mercy, but whom He

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hardened. Here again we have simply the declaration of the fact that the principle of election is that of the will of God, nothing being said concerning the reason or the method of its exercise. It is most important however that we should clearly understand the meaning of the declaration, "For this very purpose did I raise thee up," which does not mean that He created Pharaoh for the purpose of hardening his heart. The expression "raise up" signifies, not the creating of the man, but his making conspicuous in the eyes of the ages. The declaration of the apostle then is, that God chose to make this man, before the eyes of all time, an example of the result of unbelief and wilful setting of the heart against the right. While it is true that God hardened him, it is first true that Pharaoh hardened his heart against the Lord; and God's hardening consisted merely, as it ever does, in His abandoning of the man to the conditions necessarily arising as the result of his own deliberate choice.

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The closing declaration of this paragraph reveals that the principle of election is that God acts in mercy toward whom He will, and in judgment toward whom He will. Again it is necessary to insist on the fact that He always acts in conformity with His nature of love, and that His mercy is extended to such as believe, and His hardening to such as harden themselves against Him.

d. THE SOVEREIGNTY OF ELECTION

Out of this grows another difficulty. If God hardens, why does He still find fault? He gets His way, and no one can withstand His will. In answer to this suggested difficulty, the apostle insisted upon the absolute sovereignty of God, dealing first with its active operation, and then reaffirming the determining factor.

1. *The active Operation*

The statement of the sovereignty of God is now, if possible, even more emphatic

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than it has been. Paul borrowed the illustration of Jeremiah, of the potter and the clay, familiar to all Jewish ears; boldly declaring the right of the potter to make what he will of the clay in his hands. Here again however, it is most necessary to insist upon a recognition of the fact that this figure, in common with all the other argument, must be interpreted by the character of God. We sadly abuse the passage unless we ever bear in mind that the lesson of the potter and the clay is not learned when we think merely of the right of the potter. We must also have in mind Himself, His character, His avowed purpose. It is perfectly true, and needs to be emphasised, that man could have had no right to complain against the absolute justice of God had He swept the sinning race away without opportunity of redemption. The sooner this is granted the better it will be for all our thinking, and for all our living. At the same time this right must be interpreted by the fact that He did not do so, but that He exer-

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cised His sovereignty by providing ■ salvation for man out of his ruin and degradation. Therefore if at last any shall be cast away, it will not be because God has exercised the right of His justice merely, but because such have refused to avail themselves of the salvation provided by the right of His mercy.

The exercise of this sovereignty in the case of the vessels of wrath is, that in order to reveal the true nature and reason of that wrath, He endured them with much long-suffering. The exercise of this sovereignty in the case of the vessels of mercy is, that in order to make known the riches of His grace, He prepared them unto glory.

Thus in each case the infinite patience and tenderness of God is manifested. His wrath waits in the case of such as are vessels of wrath, until by their own choice and action they are "fitted unto destruction"; and in the case of the vessels of mercy, He prepares them unto glory, whether they be Jews or Gentiles. It is of supreme importance that all that is

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mysterious in these passages which affirm the sovereignty of God, should be interpreted by the facts concerning Him, which have been revealed to men in the Person of His Son.

By two quotations from the Old Testament Scriptures, the apostle re-affirmed the fact of Divine election. It is to be noticed that the quotation from Hosea is used in a wider sense than by the prophet himself. In the actual prophecy the reference was to the ten tribes, but in harmony with the whole teaching of his letter, Paul referred to all such as were, according to the flesh, outside the covenant, that is, to the Gentiles. Those who were not the people of God are to be made His people, and are to be brought into the place of covenant blessing. This is simply a matter of Divine choice.

Then in a quotation from Isaiah he re-emphasised what he had previously declared, that not all Israel after the flesh shall be saved, but a remnant only. This again is by Divine choice.

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2. *The determining Factor*

In conclusion, the apostle declared the reason of the determining choice in each case. The Gentiles are chosen to become the people of God as they attain righteousness by faith. Israel as a whole, seeking to establish a righteousness apart from faith, fails. Thus the choice of God is of such as believe. The test is the Son of His love. To those seeking righteousness by works, He is a rock of offence. To the believing He is salvation, and they shall not be put to shame.

Thus while it is perfectly true that men are chosen of God to salvation, irrespective of their national relationship, or even of their morality ; it is equally true that only such are chosen as believe on Him Whom God has provided for human salvation.

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ii. REJECTION

On the basis of the principle of election as discussed, Israel as a nation is rejected. The apostle now proceeded to deal with that fact in order to show its real reason. In doing so, he first of all declared the fact of their failure in terms of his own sympathy and compassion; and then proceeded to show that their way of return must be through Christ; thus finally coming to the definite declaration of the reason of their rejection.

a. INTRODUCTION

Again the apostle revealed his affection for his own people after the flesh, in the declaration of his desire and supplication for their salvation. In loyalty to truth he had ruthlessly exposed the sin of Israel, and declared their necessary rejection, because of their refusal to believe. Being about to emphasise this teaching, he first recognised that they had a zeal, but declared that it was in conflict with the plan of God.

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In all that he said about them, it is evident that he was speaking out of his own personal experience. Looking back to the days before he was apprehended on the way to Damascus, he remembered how he was filled with zeal, which he now knew to be zeal without knowledge. Interpreting the action of his people by his own experience, he declared them to be ignorant of God's Righteousness, which declaration was equivalent to saying that their standard of righteousness was low and imperfect.

When it is remembered that the apostle ever had in mind the Lord Himself when he spoke of the Righteousness of God, it is easy to understand his description of these people as "being ignorant of God's Righteousness." Their idea of that Righteousness was due to their misunderstanding of the written law; their ignorance of the true meaning of that law resulted from the fact that they had not known Christ; hence they were going about, endeavouring to establish a righteousness of their own, refusing to submit to the Righteousness of God, which

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is Christ. Paul knew perfectly well in his own experience, that nothing so soon compels a man to cease seeking to establish his own righteousness as a vision of the Righteousness of God. Here again it is impossible to escape the conviction that what he said of them was the result of his own experience, when on the way to Damascus, he was going about, establishing his own righteousness; but a vision of the Righteousness of God at once brought him to the position of submission thereto.

In the apostle's dealing with Israel here, we have the exhibition of the true Christian temper, which it is well for us to ponder. He made no attempt to justify that which was wrong, even though it was sincere, and characterised by zeal. He held out no false hope that those who persistently refused to fall in with the Divine plan might yet be saved, because they were doing the best they knew. Nevertheless he felt and declared a yearning love for these very people, which drove him to unceasing prayer and earnest labour for their salvation.

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b. THE WAY OF RETURN

The apostle immediately proceeded to discuss the way of Righteousness according to the plan of God, in contrast to the attempt that Israel was making to establish its own righteousness.

1. *Christ*

The whole plan of God is stated in comprehensive terms in the words, "Christ is the end of the law unto Righteousness to every one that believeth." This is not a declaration that the requirements of the law are done away, but rather that they are all fulfilled in and through Christ in the experience of those who believe. While for the justification of the sinner Christ the Righteousness of God is imputed upon the basis of faith, for his sanctification Christ the Righteousness of God is imparted.

2. *Righteousness by Faith*

That Righteousness is by faith, he then proceeded to argue, calling first the witness

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of Moses ; then showing that the principle enunciated by Moses was fulfilled in the apostolic preaching of Christ ; finally making a universal application of that principle.

It is interesting to notice how Paul read into Old Testament quotations larger meanings than they seem at first to warrant. Whether either Moses or Isaiah understood the full value of what they wrote is extremely doubtful. They had both at least discovered a principle, namely, that of faith in a deliverer working safety. Paul making use of their words, showed that these things are fulfilled in Christ. He need not be sought for in the height or the depth, for now He has indeed come. The word is nigh men, in the mouth and in the heart ; and the condition of salvation is that of belief with the heart, and confession with the mouth.

It is intensely interesting and of great importance to notice that at the close of this section, which has been so full of the subject of election, the apostle again quot-

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ing from the Old Testament Scriptures, once from Isaiah and once from Joel, shows by the use of the great word "Whosoever" that salvation is at the disposal of all who believe.

3. *The Method*

Then almost abruptly, and yet in closest connection, in a series of questions, he revealed the importance of the work of preaching the Gospel. There can be no calling on One not believed in. There can be no belief in One not heard of. There can be no hearing without a preacher. There can be no preaching without a commission.

Once again falling into Old Testament quotation, and again by his use of it, enlarging its meaning, he described the preachers of the Gospel through whose message men will believe unto salvation, in the words,

"How beautiful are the feet of them that
bring glad tidings of good things."

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C. THE REASON OF REJECTION

Having thus declared the fact of Israel's failure, and having hastened to show the way of salvation provided for them, and for all men, the apostle declared the reason of their rejection.

From among the number of those who heard the glad tidings published by the missionary messengers, only some were elected. They were such as not only heard but hearkened, and he adduced in defence of that view, the complaint of Isaiah, "Who hath believed our report?" The truth which is brought out here with great clearness is that God elects those who believe to salvation, rather than that those believe whom God elects. This is a distinction with a difference. It does not propose to clear away all the mystery that surrounds the subject. It does, however, place the emphasis at the right point, as it reveals the fact that responsibility rests upon those who hear. It must not be forgotten that such, and such only, are

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being dealt with in this section. The subject of those who do not hear is not under consideration. The responsibility herein indicated, they do not share. None can believe in Him of Whom they have not heard. To have heard is to have entered the region of responsibility.

The question then is, Had Israel such responsibility? and the inquiry is answered by the apostle in three ways.

He showed first that they had the testimony of Nature in common with all men, quoting from the psalm of Revelation, and from that part of it which deals with the revelation through Nature.

He next affirmed that they had the testimony of Moses, and the quotation he made in this connection is interesting, for passing over all the fact of the law which was given by Moses, he quoted from the book of Deuteronomy, and therein from the great song of Moses, in the course of which he prophetically dealt with the failure of Israel, declaring that on account thereof God would provoke them to jealousy by

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making use of people outside the covenant, for the accomplishment of His purpose. Thus in the most emphatic way he declared that through Moses they had heard.

Finally he reminded them that they had the testimony of the prophetic ministry. Referring to Isaiah, he quoted two sayings of his, the first of which exactly harmonised with his quotation from Moses, in that it declared how that Jehovah would be sought of a people that had not known Him, and become manifest to a people not called by His name ; all of which emphasised the fact of Israel's knowledge.

The second quotation is in some sense, not a second, for in Isaiah it immediately follows the other ; but it emphasises the long-suffering compassion of God toward His disobedient people, thus even more vividly setting forth the fact that they had heard.

Thus the reason of their rejection was that they did not hearken, even though they had heard the Word of God in Nature, through law, and by the mouth of the prophets.

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This last quotation from Isaiah is of supreme value as it reveals exactly the Divine attitude, that namely of hands spread out continuously toward a rebellious people. The will of God is the salvation of all such, and He has elected to salvation those who believe. If rebellion be persisted in, then salvation is impossible, and those rebelling are not elected. To declare that God has arbitrarily chosen some to salvation, so that they must be saved ; and that then He spreads out His hands in the attitude of mercy toward such as cannot be saved, is surely little short of blasphemy.

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iii. RESTORATION

The rejection of Israel is not final, and the apostle turned to the argument in proof of this, by almost abrupt question and answer. He then proceeded to defend his answer; afterwards writing a paragraph specially to Gentiles on the subject; finally expressing his hope for Israel.

a. INTRODUCTION

The foregoing discussion gave rise to a new difficulty, which the apostle expressed in the inquiry, "Did God cast off His people?" This he at once answered by emphatic denial, emphasising that denial by claiming to be himself, "an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin," this claim illustrating his contention that relation to Abraham in the economy of God is spiritual, and results from faith; so that while all he claimed was true in the realm of the flesh, it was pre-eminently true by grace.

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b. DEFENCE OF THE ANSWER

The apostle proceeded to defend his denial along three lines of argument.

He first declared that the original Divine purpose is accomplished progressively by an elect remnant. He then proceeded to show how the temporary casting off of the nation after the flesh, and the bringing in of the Gentiles is a partial fulfilment of the original Divine intention. He finally declared that that Divine purpose will be fulfilled to the letter, in the ultimate restoration of Israel as a nation.

1. *A perpetual Remnant*

His argument concerning the remnant really commenced in that personal reference in which he claimed to be “an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin”; for as we saw, by that reference he inferentially claimed that in his life of faith in the Son of God, he realised the true purpose of God in the creation of that nation, whose designation *Israel* indicated

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its princely power with God and men ; shared relationship to Abraham, the father of the nation ; and entered into that kinship wherein his great namesake of the same tribe had so signally failed.

He next quoted the fact of the remnant in the days of Elijah, the seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Baal, in order to show that God's purpose had never been wholly frustrated by Israel's failure. Even in those dark days of decadence, a remnant far larger than even the prophet knew, were loyal to Jehovah, and thus formed the true Israel of God.

He then declared that "at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." This election of grace is not of works, therefore it is of faith ; and thus the apostle affirmed that all the principles and purposes of God in the creation of the peculiar people according to the flesh, are maintained and fulfilled in those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, God's appointed Saviour and King. Israel after the flesh, is for the time being rejected,

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but all the essential values of the Israel ideal are maintained and safeguarded in that elect race, consisting of the whole company of those who are justified by faith.

2. *The Bringing in of the Gentiles*

This however does not tell all the story. Notice the question, "What then?" that is to say, What is to be the issue of this? Is the fulfilment of the original ideal to which he has referred, the final fulfilment? Is the Israel of history, the earthly nation, indeed abandoned in favour of the new spiritual people? The apostle was careful to correct any such wrong impression. He again admitted, and even definitely stated that what Israel sought and failed to find as a nation, the elect remnant, that is, those believing and obedient, has found; while the rest, that is, those unbelieving and disobedient, were blind. Now inquired the apostle, did they stumble that they might fall? That is to say, was the casting off of these people as an earthly people final? He immediately answered his inquiry by

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emphatic negative, and proceeded to explain the issue of the national fall. Through that fall, salvation came to the Gentiles.

3. *Ultimate Restoration*

His confidence in the ultimate restoration of the earthly people is evident in the question in which he indicated his conviction of how much more their fulness will be to the world than their fall has been. The teaching of this argument is that God in over-ruling wisdom and grace, has brought to the world through Israel's failure, the very salvation which should have come to it through its success. They were created a nation in order that through them all the nations should be blessed. Failing to realise the Divine intention concerning their own national life, they consequently and necessarily failed to fulfil that intention concerning the nations outside. God however has not allowed the outside nations to suffer, but in infinite grace has wrought, through the fall of His earthly people, toward the enrichment of

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the whole world. This being so, how much more will their fulness, resulting from restoration, minister toward the same end ?

c. ADDRESS TO GENTILES

1. *His Anxiety for Israel*

While what the apostle had written in this section had been specially intended to answer the objections of Israelites, he was conscious of the fact that the teaching might be misinterpreted by Gentiles, not only because it meant salvation and blessing to them, but also because such ministry might provoke Israel to jealousy, so that some of them might be saved. Yet even this was not the ultimate in his anxiety. That is marked in a declaration, which indicating his certainty of the restoration of Israel, shows his conception of the final value of that restoration. "If the casting away of them is the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead ?" Thus while great blessing has come to the world through the fall of

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Israel, the greater blessing is yet to come by the way of her restoration.

2. *The Figure of the Olive Tree*

The possible misconception of his teaching on the part of the Gentiles, the apostle corrected by the figure of the olive tree; a figure which emphasises the fact that the underlying purpose and power of God are the subjects of supreme importance and value. Nothing can be more solemn than his charge to the Gentile Christians not to glory over the branches which have been broken off; and his solemn warning to them that if God spared not natural branches, which were broken off because of unbelief, neither will He spare those grafted in from the wild tree, save upon the one condition of belief.

With evident solemnity the apostle charged the Gentiles, "Behold then the goodness and severity of God." His severity is manifested in the cutting off of the natural branches, because of unbelief. His goodness is evidenced in His reception of

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the Gentiles upon the basis of belief. The relation resulting from this reception is entirely dependent upon continuity of belief, for if this be absent, those so received will in turn be cut off.

He then stated the subject from the other side. If the branches which have been cut off continue not in their unbelief, they also shall be grafted in.

Nothing can possibly be clearer than the doctrine of human responsibility which runs through this argument. God is unchanging in principle and purpose. His goodness and severity are the two operations of the one purpose, and man's experience of one or the other depends entirely upon his own attitude. Against unbelief, whether of Israel or of the Gentile world, His severity operates in cutting off. Toward belief, whether of one or the other, His goodness operates in grafting in.

3. *His Hope for Israel*

This hardening of Israel as a whole is only temporary. Through the fulness of the

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Gentiles at last all Israel shall be saved, that is, the nation as a nation shall be restored.

As touching the Gospel, Israel is for the period, treated as an enemy. As touching the election, that is, the elected remnant—for the term here must be used as in verse seven—they are beloved for the fathers' sake. Thus through this maintenance of a remnant God keeps His covenant with the fathers through the period of national rejection, but at last the nation as a whole will be restored. Unbelieving Israel has been rejected as a nation, in order that the outside world they failed to bless, may receive salvation. Through the accomplishment of that larger purpose at last blessing will return to Israel. In this argument the apostle emphasised the certainty of the final restoration of Israel, without giving any details as to time or method.

THE CENTRAL DOXOLOGY

This doxology is really the conclusion of the whole doctrinal statement of the

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epistle. The outburst of rapturous praise is the result of the apostle's own consciousness of the wonderful victory of God through Christ over all the opposing forces of evil; and His solution in infinite wisdom of the problems that baffle the intellect of man.

The first note of the doxology is that of an adoring recognition of the depth of the riches of the wisdom and the knowledge of God; and of man's utter inability to perfectly understand or finally to explain.

Nothing brings greater comfort to the human mind, as it contemplates the perplexing mysteries of good and of evil, of the power and limitation of human will, than to fall back upon the certainty that what we know not, God knows.

Here again however, the comfort of the certainty is the result of conviction concerning the character of God, resulting from His revelation of Himself in Christ. It could hardly bring peace to the heart to know that He knows that of which man

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is ignorant, unless it were a certainty that His infinite wisdom directs His infinite power, according to the impulse of His infinite love. Of this deepest fact of His love, the heart is convinced by His revelation of Himself in Christ.

Having thus recognised the wisdom of God, the doxology proceeds in the declaration of certainty that “of Him, and through Him, and unto Him are all things.” Here again the fact of His character is the true source of comfort. Knowing Him to be love, what comfort there is in the conviction that all things find in Him their origin, their process, and their goal!

The last note of the doxology is an ascription of glory to Him Who in the splendour and loneliness of His wisdom is acting in all-conquering power, under the constraint of His nature of love.

At the close of this section it is most important that we remember that the whole interpretation of the inscrutable wisdom, and invincible might of God, is to be found in the revelation of His grace in Jesus,

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which is the foundation doctrine of the whole Epistle.

Moreover it must never be forgotten, that all the difficulties occurring to the mind, are to find their solution in the certainty of what God is in the light of that revelation; and the consequent assurance that whatever He does, must be right.

B. THE TRANSFORMATION—BY SALVATION.

xii.-xv. 13

FINAL APPEAL.

xii. 1, 2

i. THE GROUND OF APPEAL.

"The Mercies of God."

a. JUSTIFICATION—SPIRIT.

b. SANCTIFICATION—MIND.

c. GLORIFICATION—BODY.

ii. THE APPEAL.

a. THE BODY.

Living Sacrifice.

Holy.

Acceptable to God.

b. THE SPIRIT.

Spiritual Worship.

c. THE MIND.

Renewed.

iii. THE REASON OF APPEAL.

Prove the Will of God.

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B. THE TRANSFORMATION—BY SALVATION

In the second division of his treatise, the apostle applied the great doctrine of salvation to the immediate duty of the saints. Therein he showed how the forces of grace have fruition in the lives of those saved thereby. The division falls into four parts; the final appeal; a description of the simplicity of personal life; a description of relative life as submission to those without; and of relative life as sympathy toward those within.

FINAL APPEAL

The final appeal is the first word of the practical application of the letter, and indeed all that follows is but exposition and enforcement thereof.

The word “therefore” links all that is now to be said, with everything which has already been said. The argument for conduct is based upon the truth enunciated. Because of the grace of God, manifested

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in spite of all human failure, the believer is called to definite attitudes and actions which correspond with the provisions of salvation. In his fundamental affirmation the apostle described the action of God through Christ as "the power of God unto salvation." Having set forth the facts concerning the power, he now appealed to the saints, to produce corresponding results in the exercise of that power.

His ground of appeal is indicated in the words, "by the mercies of God." These mercies are revealed by the great words around which the previous teaching has gathered, those namely of justification, sanctification, and glorification.

The first of these indicates that immediate salvation of the spirit, which results from faith. The second indicates that progressive salvation of the mind, which results from the salvation of the spirit. The third refers to that final salvation of the body, which will complete the work of grace.

It is well to notice what the structure

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of this final appeal reveals, as to the apostle's conception of human personality. Man is recognised as being essentially spirit. He possesses his body, and is able to offer it. The difference between the body and the spirit is that between the sacrifice and the one who offers. Man as a worshipper is a spirit. His sacrificial symbol of worship is his own body, which he is called upon to present to God; and the apostle declares that this act is of the nature of spiritual worship.

The first experience of the power of God unto salvation is the salvation of the spirit. The last experience will be that of the salvation of the body. The first expression of obedience is to be that of the presentation of this body to God. This includes as fundamental, the perpetual yielding of the spirit to Him Who has justified it; and then its activity in the government of the body under that will of God which has become the sufficient law of the spirit-life. Following upon the experience of the power of God in

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justification, which is the salvation of the spirit, the power of God unto salvation is experienced in sanctification, which is the renewing of the mind. Thus the justified spirit, acting through the sanctified mind, presents the body to God, and the great process of transformation goes forward.

The reason of the appeal is that the saints may prove the will of God. The doctrine of salvation held intellectually, apart from volitional abandonment thereto, cannot produce experimental knowledge of the perfection of the will of God. Hence the importance of this great appeal.

The teaching of the appeal is perfectly clear as to the method by which the body is to be presented to God. It is not that of scourging, or mutilation, or destruction. These are all false and imperfect methods. The true ideal is that of using it in all its powers, according to "the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." The central consideration is no longer to be that of the fashion of the age, either as to intellect, emotion, or will, in the matter of

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food, or of raiment, or of occupation. It is to be that of the will of God. The spirit of man restored to God through faith in Christ has an entirely new outlook or consciousness. The mind is renewed, and therefore the body is dedicated in conformity with the thought of the renewed mind, and the character of the restored spirit.

The completeness of the apostle's ideal of abandonment to the will of God is marked. The spirit is evidently God's. The mind is therefore renewed according to the will of God. The body is consequently presented to God.

What a glorious ideal of life! It is wholly dependent however for fulfilment, upon that faith in Jesus, upon which man is justified, and through the exercise of which sanctification proceeds to glorification.

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I. SIMPLICITY. PERSONAL LIFE

Having in his appeal declared the true attitude of the Christian life to be that of surrender to the will of God, the apostle proceeded to show how such surrender will be expressed. The teaching is full of interest and importance, as there may be much talk of submission while there is no practical evidence of the same. The first positive proof of abandonment to the will of God is that the personal life is characterised by simplicity. In dealing with this, the apostle defined the character as being that of humility; and the consciousness as that of communion; finally describing the consequent conduct of simplicity.

i. THE CHARACTER OF HUMILITY

Basing his right upon the grace that was given him, and thus manifesting his own true humility, the apostle appealed carefully to the individual, as is evident from his

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phrase, "I say . . . to every man." His message was both negative and positive. A man is "not to think . . . more highly than he ought"; he is "so to think . . . according as God hath dealt . . . a measure of faith." The plain meaning of this is that a man's opinion of himself must be that of God's opinion of him. It is a most searching and safeguarding conception. Let every man honestly stand in the presence of God, and become conscious of the Divine measurement of himself, and there will be very little fear of that objectionable pride which is at the root of so much which is dishonouring to God, and which hinders the witness of the saints. The whole setting demonstrates the fact that the humility enjoined is humility concerning spiritual things. Of course that will create humility in all things. There is always danger that a person having solemnly dedicated everything to God, should on that very account become proud, and there is no pride more dangerous and more objectionable than spiritual pride.

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ii. THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF COMMUNION

The last statement of the paragraph defining the character of humility, prepares the way for the apostle's discussion of the consciousness of communion. "God hath dealt to each man a measure of faith," is a declaration which recognises a certain deposit committed to the individual; and also the aggregation of such into the faith,—in the most spacious meaning of that word,—of the whole Church. To be conscious of that individual deposit, is necessarily to become conscious of its relation to the larger whole. The apostle therefore immediately proceeded to the declaration of truth concerning the whole body, and the complementary nature of the offices of the members thereof; showing that for the fulfilment of the function of the whole, the service of every part is necessary. Consequently the importance of each is measured not by its own significance, but by its contribution to the whole. Using the figure of the human body, he applied it in his

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declaration that believers are one body in Christ, and therefore are related to each other as members.

For purpose of illustration he then made particular application of his figure, by an enumeration of gifts, and an indication of the way in which they should be used, in order to the accomplishment of the purpose of the whole body or Church.

Of these gifts, four have definitely to do with the spiritual ministry whereby the whole Church is edified in grace. Prophecy is the gift of spiritual interpretation. Ministry is that sacred service whereby the truth revealed in prophecy is applied. Teaching is the gift of the patient impartation of instruction. Exhortation is the gift of stirring up those who are taught, to obedience.

The remaining three are operative in that material activity whereby the spiritual realities are made manifest. They are the gifts of serving tables, none the less sacred than the former, and absolutely necessary if the former are to be exercised to full

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advantage. Giving is the sacred gift through which the actual material supply is provided. Ruling is the gift of leading and conducting business affairs. Showing mercy is the gift of distributing material aid.

As the apostle named these gifts, he indicated the method of their use; and there is a difference between his statements with regard to the first four, and those with regard to the last three. For the clearer understanding of this passage I should personally omit all the italicised words.

It will then be seen that the little phrase “according to,” becomes extremely suggestive with regard to the first four. He first recognised that gifts differed “according to the grace that was given to us”; and then insisted upon it that the exercise was to be according to the gift. Prophecy is to be according to the proportion of the faith, for here the marginal reading, “the faith,” instead of “our faith” is of great value. Prophecy has many emphases. To different men different proportions of the faith are given. Let them exercise that which they

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have. The same principle is applied with regard to ministry, to teaching, and to exhortation.

The use of the preposition "with" is equally suggestive with regard to the last three. The exercise of the gift of giving is to be with liberality; that of the gift of ruling, with diligence; that of the gift of showing mercy, with cheerfulness.

Let it be carefully observed that all these things are gifts bestowed in order to use. In the recognition of that fact there is a correction of the possibility of pride. All those possessions which make us of use to Christ and the Church are received from Him, and not contributed by us to Him, save in the sense that we exercise them under His control to the glory of His name.

Moreover all these are gifts of equal value to the well-being of the whole, and no graver mistake can be made than that of attempting to set them in some order of importance. In the economy of faith they are of equal value.

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Humility therefore is manifest in the exercise of a gift, when it is used with a view to the fulfilment of the function of the whole body, rather than for the glorification of self.

iii. THE CONDUCT OF SIMPLICITY

The character of humility, and the consciousness of communion, inevitably result in the conduct of simplicity. In dealing with that, the apostle first enunciated the principle, and then enjoined the practice.

a. THE PRINCIPLE

The master-principle of simplicity is expressed in briefest words, "Let love be without hypocrisy." It will be noticed that this injunction pre-supposes the presence of love, and indicates the true method of its activity. It is to be without hypocrisy; that is, without acting, or simple, as opposed to complex; it must be genuine. The command is all-inclusive, at once revealing the true impulse of obedience to all the

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instructions concerning the practice, and indicating the unifying bond which holds them in true relation.

b. THE PRACTICE

The practice of simplicity has two realms of application, the first within the fellowship ; and the second in the relation between the saints and those who are antagonistic to them.

1. *Within the Fellowship*

In examining the teaching of the apostle concerning the practice of simplicity within the fellowship it is interesting to note the alternation between personal character and relative conduct. There are three groups of instructions.

The first concerns the personal purity of the mind of love ; it abhors the evil and cleaves to the good ; and shows that the relative expression of it, is that of tender affection, and the rendering of honour to others.

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The second concerns the personal activity of the mind of love, indicating its energy, “in diligence not slothful”; its inspiration, “fervent in spirit”; its motive, “serving the Lord”; its buoyancy, “rejoicing in hope”; its persistence, “patient in tribulation”; its power, “continuing stedfastly in prayer.” The relative expression of this activity is that of supplying the needs of others, “communicating to the necessities of the saints; given to hospitality”; the bestowment of blessing on those who persecute, “bless them that persecute you; bless, and curse not”; the keen sensitiveness which enters into the experience of others, “rejoice with them that rejoice; weep with them that weep”; and the unity of mind which is of the essence of peace, “be of the same mind one toward another.”

The third concerns the personal humility of the mind of love. It is not ambitious, “Set not your mind on high things”; it is meek, “condescend to things that are lowly”; it is not arrogant, “be not wise in your own conceits.” The relative

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expression of humility is that of non-resistance, "render to no man evil for evil"; and honesty, "take thought for things honourable in the sight of all men."

2. *Towards Enemies*

Such self-emptying, love-centred devotion to the will of God will alone make possible obedience to what follows. The aim of the simple life in which love is without hypocrisy is to be that of peace. In this connection it is to be carefully noted that the "if it be possible" is not an excuse for a believer under any circumstances to break the peace. It is rather a recognition that there will be some men who will not be at peace. The burden of responsibility is indicated by placing emphasis upon the word "you," "As much as in *you* lieth." There is an old adage that two are necessary to a quarrel. Taking this for granted, the Christian is to see to it that there shall be no contribution on his part to the making of a quarrel. If there is a breach of the peace, it must not be created by those who

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are devoted to the will of God. Where this aim is recognised, the attitude which the apostle enjoined is the result. If an outsider violates the principle of peace, the believer is not to avenge, for "Vengeance belongeth unto Me ; I will recompense, saith the Lord."

This attitude is to be demonstrated by an activity. If the paragraph had ended with the words we have quoted, it would have been possible to understand a very popular attitude of mind toward the great declaration. How often we are tempted to say with a sigh of relief, Yes, thank God, vengeance does belong to the Lord ! Thus although active reprisals are prevented, the heart rejoices in the thought that at last the punishment of God will be meted out to the wrong-doer. This thought is entirely out of harmony with the will of God for His child, and therefore the believer is called to such action as will demonstrate the existence of true and unfeigned love. The hungry man is to be fed, and the thirsty one supplied with water.

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The closing injunction deals with the inner motives. "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Thus the first expression of true devotion to the will of God is to be found in that simplicity which expresses itself in the humility of a self-emptied life, and the genuine love which creates true relations with all men.

II. SUBMISSION. RELATIVE LIFE. THOSE WITHOUT. xiii.

i. DEFINITION. 1-10

a. THE POWERS. 1-7

1. *Subjection.* 1-5

a. *The Principle.* 1-4

To the Powers as of God.	
Ordained of God.	1, 2
For good.	3, 4 ^a
For punishment of evil.	4 ^b

β. *The Test.* 5

For Conscience' Sake.

2. *Contribution.* 6, 7

a. *The Cause of Tribute.* 6

β. *The Kind of Tribute.* 7

b. THE PEOPLE. 8-10

1. *Obligation. The Individual.* 8

2. *Application. The State.* 9

a. *The Family. Adultery.*

β. *Personality. Murder.*

γ. *Property. Theft.*

δ. *Society. Coveting.*

3. *Realisation.* 10

ii. INSPIRATION. 11-14

a. THE SEASON. 11, 12^a

1. *Morning.*

2. *Salvation nearer.*

b. THE SAINTS. 12^b-14

1. *General.* 12^b

a. *Let us cast off.*

β. *Let us put on.*

2. *Particular.* 13, 14

a. *The Works of Darkness.*

β. *The Armour of Light.*

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II. SUBMISSION. RELATIVE LIFE. THOSE WITHOUT

Still dealing with the evidences of submission to the will of God, the apostle turned to the discussion of the attitude of the believer toward the world. That attitude may broadly be described as that of the submissive spirit; and in dealing with it the apostle defined it in relation to the powers, and to the people; finally revealing its inspiration.

i. DEFINITION

a. THE POWERS

The first manifestation of submission toward the outside world is that of obedience to authority. This section was specially necessary for Christians living in Rome at the time of the apostle's writing. Nevertheless he so stated it as to leave clearly in view the abiding principles rather than the local colouring.

It is a plain declaration of the true Christian attitude toward the governing

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authority, even though that authority is anything but Christian. The powers are declared to be of God. The individual governor is a minister of God for good, an avenger for wrath to them that do evil. The Christian must therefore be subject, for he is supremely to be a revelation of the necessity for, and the value of, government in human affairs. There is evidence of a clear consciousness in the mind of the apostle of the active government of God in the affairs of men; and of the fact that He delegates power and authority in certain directions for the purpose of the cultivation of good, and the restriction and punishment of evil. Therefore the Christian's submission to the will of God is manifested in the world by his obedience to properly constituted authority.

The apostolic statement of the case on the positive side, inferentially reveals the negative side. Subjection on the part of the believer is to be rendered to the power when he is fulfilling the true intent of his calling and office. If he violates that, then it is

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clearly the duty of the Christian in loyalty to God, to disobey him. Let us presume that the statement concerning the ruler contained in the text, is reversed in actual experience. If his authority gives evil its opportunity, and hinders good; there must necessarily be a reversal of the attitude of the Christian toward him, because the matter of first importance is always that of loyalty to the will of God. If the ruler is a terror to good works rather than to evil; every Christian man is bound to oppose and defy him at whatever cost. If the ruler whose business it is to avenge evil, neglects the fulfilment of this purpose, then such as are loyal to the will of God are bound to protest, even if necessary at cost to themselves. Paul's own history gives examples of his rebuking of rulers. The first law in the life of the Christian is that of his abandonment to the will of God. When authority is exercised in harmony therewith, obedience is enjoined. When however, that authority comes into conflict with Divine laws, the Christian

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must refuse to obey, even at the cost of suffering.

The test of obedience is ever to be that of conscience, which in the case of the Christian is not merely that sense of right or wrong, which is common to humanity; but the conception of the will of God which is the result of his illumination in Christ.

The expression of subjection to authority is to be that of contribution to the necessities of the commonwealth. The kind of tribute which the Christian is to pay is described as "tribute," that is tax on person and property; "custom," which is toll on goods; "fear," which is obedience to the laws; and "honour," which is the holding in proper esteem of those placed in authority.

b. THE PEOPLE

The attitude of submission toward the people is as important as that toward the powers. The apostle defined the obligation in a comprehensive statement. It is

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that of the payment of all just dues, and is enjoined in the declaration of obligation, "Owe no man anything, save to love one another." This is a full and remarkable injunction. To love is to discharge all obligations except that of loving. It is impossible to finish paying the debt of love. In the moment in which a man ceases to owe his neighbour love he will begin to be in debt in some other direction. The constant consciousness of the believer is that love to his neighbour is always due, although it is constantly paid.

To always owe love, is to make it impossible to defraud in matters of purity, of life, of property, and of social relationship. Thus as the apostle declared, "Love therefore is the fulfilment of the law"; and the abandonment of man to the will of God is supremely evidenced to the outside world, not by protestations concerning the attitude, but by living in relation to other men, under the impulse of love.

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ii. INSPIRATION

The apostle next dealt with the perpetual incentive to realisation of the abandonment of life to the will of God, both in its inner fact, and its outward manifestation. The opening phrase, "And this," undoubtedly refers, not merely to submission in relative life, but also to simplicity in personal life. Indeed this paragraph may be read in close connection with the injunction which we have described as the final appeal. "And this," that is, the abandonment of the whole life to God, expressed in simplicity and submission, is to be realised in the power of the certainty of the consummation.

The passage is a graphic and beautiful picture of the true position of the Christian as expecting the breaking of the day, and the coming of the Lord. The first flush of the dawn is always discernible upon the eastern sky. Salvation in its fulness, is every moment nearer than when the Christian first believed. Darkness is every-

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where. The children of darkness are given over to revelling and drunkenness, to chambering and wantonness, to strife and jealousy. The children of God are to cast off all such works, and are to put on the armour of light, which is the Lord Jesus Christ. They are to walk as in the day, even though as yet the night is round about them. Because they ever feel the breath of the morning moving through the darkness, they are to cast off the garments of the night, to clothe themselves with the armour of light, and wait for the coming of the day.

In this exposition of the true meaning of the sacrificed life there is taken into account the threefold fact of redemption as dealt with in the argument concerning salvation in the earlier part of the Epistle. In that argument the apostle showed that in the economy of redemption provision is made for justification, sanctification, and glorification.

The duty of the Christian in the light of justification, is that of sacrifice to the

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will of God. The spirit presents the body through the renewing of the mind, which is sanctification.

The duty of the believer in the light of sanctification, is that of the outworking in life, and through sacrifice, of the righteousness imparted in justification; which outworking is the prophecy of glorification.

The duty of the Christian in the light of glorification, is that of perpetual recognition of the approach of the fulness of salvation, which recognition must affect all life toward sanctification in the power of justification.

III. SYMPATHY. RELATIVE LIFE. THOSE WITHIN.

xiv.-xv. 13

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III. SYMPATHY. RELATIVE LIFE. THOSE WITHIN

The last section, dealing with the evidences of submission to the will of God, is occupied with a discussion of some of the difficulties which may arise within the circle of the Christian Church. It is not necessary to suppose that the apostle had in mind actually existing trouble, as he had not yet reached Rome, and in all probability knew nothing of the details of Church life there. His experiences at Corinth, where he was writing, had however revealed the kind of question likely to arise, and the burden of his teaching is that of the necessity for sympathy among those who are within; and he enjoined its exercise; as toleration; for purposes of edification; and in hospitality.

It is interesting to notice how in this matter there is evident the selecting wisdom of the inspiring Spirit, for the subjects dealt with, in slightly different form, still arise, and are met by the teaching of this section.

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i. SYMPATHY AS TOLERATION

There were those in the mind of the apostle who, in all probability through the problem of the animals sacrificed to idols, had taken up the position of vegetarians. Others claimed their right to eat meat, realising that their personal relation to Christ set them entirely free from the judgment of popular opinion or custom. The apostle had a word of injunction for each of these. He described the vegetarian as "weak in faith," and charged him not to judge the man who eats all things. But neither is the man eating meat to despise the one who does not eat. These injunctions reveal attitudes continuing to this hour. Of course, the peculiar difficulty of meat sacrificed to idols does not exist; but the Christian man abstaining from meat, in all sincerity and with perfect justification, does too often judge and condemn his brother; and the non-abstaining is ever prone to despise the abstainer. Both attitudes are wrong.

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The apostle laid down a supreme principle which we ought ever to remember in its application both to our personal life and to our relation to our brethren. Every man stands or falls to his own Master. That means first of all, that we cannot be too careful to submit our whole course of life, and every action, to Him for judgment ; it means also that we cannot too carefully guard against passing our judgment upon our brethren in matters of personal conscience and conduct.

The principle is again discussed with regard to the observance of days. The court of appeal is that of the mind, loyal to Christ. If the subject of the observance of a day has indeed been submitted to Him, and the one so submitting has a personal conviction resulting therefrom, by that conviction he is to abide and act, without reference to the opinion of others. The centre now is not self, but Christ.

At first it may appear as though such action, judged by the differing lines of conduct pursued, would suggest confusion

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and disorder. More careful consideration however will show that the Lord deals with each case separately, according to His own infinite wisdom, and understanding thereof. One man may be helped and another hindered by eating meat, or by observing a day. Christ's will for each is determined by the good of each. How unwise we are therefore when we attempt to frame rules for ourselves, or for others, and then proceed to judge by such rules.

The importance of the principle is revealed in the fact that the final statement of the apostle in this application sets even such matters of conviction and conduct in relation to the death and resurrection of Jesus. The Lord passed through death into life that He might be the acting Lord of every person who believes in Him. Our fellowship in the value and virtue of His death and resurrection, cancels for ever the change which men call death, so that whether we live or die we are the Lord's; and therefore the one law of life for us is His will, and the one method of under-

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standing that will is that of direct dealing with Him in freedom from the fear of outside opinion or criticism.

Oh the glorious liberty of bondage to Christ! It is freedom from all fear of anxiety arising as to the issue of choices made by self. It is freedom, moreover, from the ceaseless fear of being misunderstood.

The final deduction from the discussion as to our attitude toward each other is that the tribunal before which we are to appear is the judgment-seat of God. The apostle illustrated by quotation from Isaiah, and the sense in which he used the passage is discovered by emphasising the expressions, “to Me,” and “to God.”

“As I live, saith the Lord, *to Me* every
knee shall bow,

And every tongue shall confess *to God.*”

Faith is to be rendered to God, and that is expressed by the bowing of the knee; the issue is that the praise of the result of this government be rendered to Him,

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for the word "confess" here carries the thought of the offering of praise.

The logical sequence of this is that when I pass judgment on my brother, I am usurping the very throne of God. He alone knows all the facts, and He alone therefore is able to pass a judgment; and this right He reserves to Himself. For any man to attempt to pass a judgment on his brother is to evince his folly, and to arrogate to himself a function which belongs to God alone.

ii. SYMPATHY AS EDIFICATION

The teaching here is in direct continuation of that already given. The apostle gives the other side of it, and creates the true balance. There is a matter on which we may exercise judgment. It is that we do not put a stumbling-block in our brother's way. The sphere of judgment open to us, is not our brother's life and action, but our own. The test by which we are to judge our life and action, is not our own welfare, but that of our brother.

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This statement of the standard of personal judgment the apostle immediately followed by showing that the highest and noblest form of freedom is the abandonment of a right, if need be, in the interest of a weak brother. He affirmed his conviction concerning the cleanness of all things to those who count them clean. This persuasion was new, and resulted wholly from his relation to the Lord Jesus. In the old days of his Pharisaism he would have made no such admission. Now however, while personally convinced of his right to eat, he was governed by the new law of love, and was prepared not to eat, what he had perfect right to eat, if the eating caused a stumbling-block in the way of his brother's progress.

That is the true Christian principle of abstention from anything which in itself may be lawful. I am not required to give up anything lawful, simply out of deference to the opinion of others; but if the lawful thing is indeed likely to cause my brother's destruction, then because of the supremacy

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of love, I am to give that up. I am not however to exercise myself in compelling some one else to give up the same thing. As the apostle showed, these things are not essential things; but "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" will often be realised by love's attention to non-essentials for the sake of the weak. The true motive is carefully insisted on, that of serving Christ, and so being well-pleasing to God, and thus approved of men.

What a remarkable contrast there is between the true Christian's use of the power of judgment and that of the worldly-wise! These pass judgment upon others from the stand-point of personal preferences and convictions. The true Christian passes judgment upon his own conduct, from the stand-point of the well-being of his brethren. The one is self-centred, dogmatic, ignorant, and often unjust. The other is love-centred, self-denying, intelligent, and always merciful.

There has been no greater hindrance to the cause of temperance in the matter of strong drink, than the intemperance and

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dogmatism of some of its advocates. Let this whole section be remembered, and its spirit realised, and it will be equally difficult for any man to insist on his right to take merely as a beverage that which is destroying so many; and for those who in the true spirit of love have foregone that right for the sake of others, to judge and despise those who do not follow their example.

The apostle then summed up the whole question by appealing for such conduct as makes for peace and mutual edification. It is to be remembered that it is evil for a Christian man to exercise a right of liberty if by so doing he harm his brother. Nevertheless the apostle zealously and carefully guarded the individual believer against the interferences of human opinion, driving us ever back upon God.

As in dealing with the necessity for toleration, he had insisted upon the fact that there is one Throne; so now in showing that sympathy expresses itself in the desire for the edification of others, he insisted upon it that there is one test, and that is faith.

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Abstention is ever to be based upon the ground of faith before God concerning what will be harmful, and therefore not upon the opinion of any outside person as to that matter. That man is pronounced happy who “judgeth not himself in that which he approveth.” There is no room in the thinking of Paul for the priest who attempts to interpret the will of God, nor for the self-satisfied person who imagines that he—or she—possesses all knowledge concerning what Christian men and women ought to do. Each individual is ever driven to personal dealing with God for the settlement of all such matters.

This however by no means issues in anything approaching looseness of moral conduct, for the apostle made it clear in this connection that perhaps the most searching and severe test of conduct is that of faith. “Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” That is to affirm two things; first that a person devoted to the Lordship of Jesus sins, when acting from any other motive than that of confidence in and

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obedience to Him. To give up meat merely because some one else thought I should do so ; to refuse to observe a day because some one considers that I ought not to do so ; without referring these matters to the arbitrament of the Lord, would in each case be sin.

And yet again, and therefore ; to continue in any action about which I am in doubt is sin. To continue to eat meat unless I have submitted the question to Him ; to observe a day without knowing His will ; is again in either case, sin. Unless I am perfectly clear that what I do I can approve on the principle of my loyalty to Him, then it is sinful to do it, no matter how specious the arguments adduced to defend its harmlessness.

How many individual questions of conduct on which we are anxious to obtain outside opinion, would be settled if this principle were always remembered and obeyed !

iii. SYMPATHY AS HOSPITALITY

As the apostle approached another matter, in which mutual forbearance is necessary,

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he repeated the general argument of the preceding paragraph. The strong should bear the infirmities of the weak, and not please self. Each is to please his neighbour for the purpose of edification.

The most powerful argument for this line of conduct is the example of Christ. He pleased not Himself. Thus the action of Christ is at once the example of the Christian, and the interpretation of the sense in which he is to please his neighbour. The example of Christ from first to last is that of One Who gave up His rights in order that He might save men. Instead of pleasing Himself, He devoted Himself to please His neighbours. This He did however, by pleasing God, and setting Himself to bring men to that same level of life. He did not please His neighbours by accommodating His conduct to false ideals of life, but by setting Himself, in spite of opposition and misunderstanding, to bring them to the true ideal.

After emphasising his declaration regarding Christ by an Old Testament quotation, the

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apostle parenthetically gave his conception of the value of these Scriptures. They were written for our learning. This is most certainly to recognise their Divine origin. No one would be prepared to say that the purpose of human authors was the instruction of those who would live hundreds of years afterwards, in order that they might have hope. Men write for their own day and generation. God, inspiring these writers to do so, had ever in mind the unborn children of faith, and so prepared for their strengthening and encouragement. If God prepared these writings for us, how utterly unwise to neglect them, or to treat them merely as part of the world's literature, interesting principally for that reason. In all their pages are to be found God's instructions for our profit and hope.

The injunction to receive one another was almost certainly addressed to Jews and Gentiles. All through the Epistle there have been evidences of the possibility of difference between these two sections in the Church. Throughout his writing the

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apostle defended the Gentile against the self-satisfied national pride of the Jew ; and the Jew against the probable contempt of the Gentile.

This was his final injunction on the subject, and he emphasised it by declaring upon the authority of the Jewish Scripture the twofold application of the work of Christ. He was indeed a Minister of the circumcision, and came to confirm the promises made to the fathers. These promises however included blessing to the Gentiles. It was for the proving of this, that he grouped these passages. Very remarkable are his quotations, and yet perfectly unstrained and natural. No honest-minded Jew could read them without seeing that in the bringing in of the Gentiles, there was indeed a fulfilment of the purpose of God through the chosen people.

How full of beauty was the habit Paul had of closing an argument with a benediction ! “The God of hope.” What a wonderful title, suggesting that God is the reason of all the hope that brightens the

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way; and that, because He is Himself full of hope. The Christian should be the greatest optimist, because of the optimism of God. Not upon the appearance of an hour, or the happenings of a century, is our hope fixed; but upon Him, Who seeing the end from the beginning, and understanding both the beginning and the end, is nevertheless the God of hope. The process by which this hope of God is ours is clearly indicated. The root of all is our believing. Never once did this fact pass out of the consciousness of the apostle, nor must it pass out of ours. The issue of faith is joy and peace; the first the present consciousness of trust, and the second the undisturbed condition of that consciousness, in view of all opposing forces or possible contingencies.

And yet again, the sphere and power of all is "the power of the Holy Spirit." The realisation of this blessing in fulness from God, will correct all differences, and make very real the unity of all believers.

CONCLUSION.

xv. 14-xvi.

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xv. 14-xvi. 23

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xv. 14-21

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c. THEIR DESCRIPTION.

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vii. SALUTATIONS FROM SAINTS.

21-23

II. CLOSING DOXOLOGY.

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CONCLUSION

The concluding section of the letter to the Romans, like the introductory section, is full of personal allusion and revelation ; but here again the glory of the theme filling the mind of the writer is clearly manifest.

While at the beginning the supreme consciousness revealed, was that of his responsibility with that of all saints, in view of their possession of the great Gospel, and in view also of the world's need ; at the close the supreme revelation is that of the fellowship of all saints in their common relationship to Christ, and in the fulfilment of responsibility. This last section of the letter consists of personal matters ; and a closing doxology.

I. PERSONAL MATTERS

i. HIS MISSION TO THE GENTILES

There are incidental revelations of Paul's methods and ideals of Christian service in this section, which are most valuable.

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While telling those to whom he wrote that his reason for writing was that there had been committed to him the ministry of the Gentiles, he spoke of that ministry so far as it had been already accomplished. While he was careful to guard against any merely personal boastfulness, yet with unaffected modesty he did not hesitate to glory in the triumph of the Gospel. In speaking of his appointment the apostle used language which indicates a phase of priestly office, too often lost sight of, when he declared that he had ministered the Gospel so that there had been an "offering up of the Gentiles." As a priest he had stood often in the presence of God, pleading the cause of man; but he also knew what it was to go back into the presence of God, bringing with him the sacrifice of souls, won through the Gospel. Too often the priests of the Lord stand empty-handed in the holy place in this respect.

In this connection it is interesting to notice his conception of the line of victory.

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“Christ wrought through me.” How glorious a commentary upon the true position of the Christian worker! Christ is the true and actual Worker, and the servant is an instrument of Christ, through whom He accomplishes His purposes. Such a conception leaves no room for boastfulness, and yet therein there is room for great confidence and positive glorying in the supreme Worker, and the accomplished work. This work is ever realised in the power of signs and wonders, and in the power of the Holy Spirit; the evidences, and energy, of the working Christ.

Finally in connection with his statement concerning his work, he declared that he had ever proceeded upon the principle of preaching the Gospel not “upon another man’s foundation,” but to those who were without the tidings, and who had not heard. How excellent a thing it will be for the whole Church when in all aggressive enterprise she proceeds upon this principle. How much of time, of energy, of money have been lost through forgetfulness of it!

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ii. HIS PURPOSES

Having been often hindered through these very necessities and labours of the Gospel, he was at last setting his face toward Rome. And yet Rome itself was not the final goal. His eyes were looking to the regions beyond, and his intention was to reach Spain; and yet even before he could come to Rome, he had an immediate duty to fulfil, that of carrying to Jerusalem the contribution from Macedonia and Achaia.

He was confident that when he came to Rome he would do so in the fulness of the blessing of Christ.

Did he ever reach Spain? We do not know. Certain it is that he went to Rome, although by unexpected ways; and it is equally certain that as he expected, he arrived there in the fulness of the blessing of Christ.

iii. HIS REQUEST FOR THEIR PRAYERS

Very touching and beautiful is the request of Paul for the prayers of the

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Christians in Rome, showing as it does, how this intrepid minister of the evangel was sensitively conscious of the perilous pathway, and craved sympathy in its highest possible activity, that of fellowship in prayer. Sometimes amid the stress and strain of the ministry of the Word, glorious toil as it is, one wonders how far those deriving help and benefit therefrom are conscious of how hungry the spirits of God's messengers are for such loving and powerful sympathy. The kindly word of spiritual appreciation is valuable, but the servant of the Lord would gladly forego that altogether, if instead there could be a larger measure of striving together in prayer on the part of the people of God.

It is impossible to read Paul's history as revealed in his writings, without being conscious that Jerusalem had ever been suspicious of him, and he had been compelled resolutely to maintain his apostolic right and authority.

He was very definite in his request as he suggested that they should pray first

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that he "might be delivered from them that are disobedient in Judæa." He was evidently conscious that his going up to Jerusalem would be the occasion of strife, and even of persecution; and he desired prayer that he might be delivered from such opposition. Secondly, that his ministration, that contribution he was taking from the churches of Asia, might be acceptable. He foresaw that the very pride of Jewish prejudice might make difficulty, and that this would harm the work nearest his heart, the preaching of the Gospel among the Gentiles; and this also he therefore committed to God, and sought their fellowship in prayer concerning it.

Finally he asked that they would pray that he might come to them in joy through the will of God, and together with them find rest.

The question which suggests itself as one reads of this apostolic request is as to whether the prayers were answered. Most assuredly they were. The story of the Acts of the Apostles shows that he was

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graciously received by the Church, and thus the second subject of prayer was answered. Also he was delivered from the terrible hatred and plotting of the disobedient in Judæa, and thus the first request was answered. Moreover, he reached Rome, and yet how different was the mode of the answer surely from what the apostle had expected ! How often the way of answer to prayer differs from our expectations ! What matters it, if it be “through the will of God” ? That was the qualifying petition which was finally answered. If we really mean it when we pray, that petition will always be answered. It is such confidence which lends power to the closing benediction, “Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.”

iv. PHŒBE

In a brief special paragraph the apostle commended Phœbe to the church at Rome ; describing her as a deaconess of the church at Cenchreæ. His appeal to them was not that they should receive her upon

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the ground of her personal worth, although he did declare that she had been a succourer of many and of himself. She was to be received in the Lord, and worthily of the saints; that is to say, their hospitality was to be in keeping with all that they were, as children of God. It has been surmised, and with great probability, that she carried the apostle's letter to the church in Rome.

V. SALUTATIONS TO SAINTS

The section of salutation is most interesting. The large number of persons named, twenty-six in all, is not remarkable when it is remembered that the letter was sent to Rome, which was at that time the centre of the world, to which men were constantly going for various reasons from all parts of the empire.

Two-thirds of these names are Greek, and are in all probability names of persons whom the apostle had actually known in his work in Asia. His old friends Prisca and Aquila were evidently back in Rome again.

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The chief interest of this passage centres in the apostle's incidentally revealed consciousness of the inter-relationships of the saints as being dependent upon their common relationship to Christ. The phrases which indicate this are scattered through the paragraph, "In the Lord. . . . In Christ Jesus . . . unto Christ . . . in Christ . . . in the Lord . . . in the Lord . . . in the Lord . . . in the Lord." When these phrases are examined in their contextual relationship it will be seen how all the facts of life and service are conditioned in that relationship to Christ. Phœbe was to be received *in the Lord*. Prisca and Aquila were fellow-workers *in Christ Jesus*. Epænetus was the first-fruits of Asia *unto Christ*. His kinsmen Andronicus and Junias were *in Christ* before him. Ampliatus was beloved *in the Lord*. Urbanus was a fellow-worker *in Christ*. Apelles was approved *in Christ*. The dividing line of the household of Narcissus was that some were *in the Lord*. Tryphæna and Tryphosa laboured *in the Lord*. Persis

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laboured much *in the Lord*. Rufus was chosen *of the Lord*.

Thus the impulse of love, the bond of service, the principle of fellowship, all resulted from union with Christ. The very sphere of life was evidently the Lord Himself, in Whose life we are all being saved, having been reconciled through His death. The atmosphere of love was that of Christ. All the toil was the activity of Christ through His people.

What a glorious picture of the unity of the Church is here afforded! The only realisation of that unity possible at any time must come by individual abiding in close relationship with the Lord.

vi. FINAL WARNING

The very consciousness of unity in Christ, which had been so evident in the salutations sent to the saints in Rome, caused the apostle to write his final word of solemn warning. Evidently he had been made acquainted with the fact that false teachers were already exerting an influence

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in Rome, and attempting to draw believers away from the doctrine which had been learned. The reference is certainly to such, rather than to such as caused division through personal ambition or quarrels, for he referred to their smooth and fair speech. What was the exact form of the heresy, we have no means of knowing; but there seems to be a hint in his express desire that the believers in Rome should be kept wise unto good, and simple toward evil. Dr. Moule thinks that the trouble was the beginning of the Gnostic heresy, which practically declared that matter being inherently evil the body must be allowed to give full vent to its unbridled passions, because the spirit of man was not related to the body, but its prisoner merely. To something of this kind the apostle evidently referred when he wrote the scathing sentence concerning these teachers; that they “serve . . . their own belly.” Such teaching was certainly not according to the doctrine, and the apostle urged the saints to turn away from those who taught

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such heresy. There can never be harmony between Christian men and those who are excusers of sin under any pretence. The conflict with Satan is recognised, but the gracious promise made at the beginning is repeated with new emphasis in the light of the evangel of the Cross, "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."

Fitting and beautiful is the benediction at this point, reminding all who were confronting that conflict, of the channel through which the promise of ultimate victory has been made possible of fulfilment in the experience of man; "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you."

vii. SALUTATIONS FROM SAINTS

Again the apostle returned to salutations; but now they were from some of those associated with him at Corinth to those at Rome. Timothy his beloved son in the faith, whom he was doubtless even then instructing for the great work of the ministry. Three of his own kinsmen, ac-

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ording to the flesh. It is interesting to note that three of Paul's blood relations were in Rome;—Andronicus, Junias, and Herodion; and three were at Corinth, Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater. Of these two, as he declared, were in Christ before he was. May it not be possible that the others were his children in faith, very personal and very precious results, not merely of his own preaching, but of that strong passion which made him write that he could wish that he himself were anathema from Christ?

Then Tertius, his amanuensis, to whom the apostle had dictated the great letter, added his personal salutation. How beautiful is this revelation of fellowship in service! He who had written the words as Paul dictated them was also a fellow-worker, interested in, and loving these believers in the great city, and therefore he added his greeting. Gaius too, his host, was interested, and sent his message of love. A man of note, Erastus, the treasurer of the city, and Quartus, of

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whom we only know that he was "the brother."

How tender and beautiful are these salutations to and from the saints, as revealing the bond existing between all those united to Christ.

II. CLOSING DOXOLOGY

The final word of the great letter of salvation is fittingly one of praise. The apostle thinking of that eternal purpose of love which having been kept in silence through past ages, was manifested in this age, in order that through all future ages glory may be ascribed to God; reverently ascribed the glory to Him, to Whom it is thus evidently due.



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